

Submitter: Heather Hiatt  
On Behalf Of: Lewis and Clark Montessori Charter School  
Committee: Senate Committee On Education  
Measure: SB767

I strongly oppose SB767. I am a parent of a child that attends Lewis & Clark Montessori Charter School. We adopted two of our foster children. They both have neurodivergent brains and have some special needs. One child does very well in public school, the other could not handle that environment and attends Lewis & Clark Montessori Charter School. Both children are thriving in their current school situations.

I was a public school teacher before I began teaching at Lewis & Clark Montessori Charter School. I believe both environments are needed. They each have their place. Because I teach at the charter school, I am able to teach many neurodivergent students, students who are LGBTQ+, children of all color and abilities. These kids all fit in our community.

Due to Gresham Barlow School District canceling our school's building lease, we are forced to find another building to house our school of 400+ students and staff with a deadline to move on June 30, 2023. This has been extremely difficult, given the short time frame to find this new school location. The school site that we have found as a possibility to purchase, is 1000 feet outside of the District. We are excited to be able to purchase a building so that we do not have to ever move again. We are a well established school of 14 years. This school was established by parents who wanted to give their children a Montessori education but not be subjected to the cost of private school.

It seems unreasonable to me to make our school, and any school who has an established charter, go through the very difficult process of trying to establish a new charter with a new district. It takes many long months to fill out all the paperwork necessary to submit a charter and then there are months of back and forth meetings and changes and resubmitting before the final steps of approval. Our school just completed this process a few months ago. Our charter school is not the only school that will be adversely affected by this Bill. Please consider my child and our school. Please turn down Senate Bill 767.

Thank you.