

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

Hello, I am writing to Oppose this bill on behalf of Lewis and Clark Montessori. The Lewis & Clark Montessori Charter School is being forced to relocate due to lease termination by our sponsoring district, Gresham-Barlow School District, and while it would be ideal for us to remain inside GBSD boundaries, there is an extremely limited time frame and lack of existing facilities to accommodate 17 classrooms. The choices are limited. We only learned of this lease termination a few months ago, and it has been a huge effort on the part of the entire community to find a new space. The school has been searching tirelessly and now have a proposed new facility-- and it is located less than 1000 feet outside of the GBSD boundary.

We are discovering that the new location offers public transit, which our current rural location does not, and opens access for enrollment to the underserved, more diverse populations in Rockwood and the surrounding area while also continuing to serve current families. Greater access & diversity is a key component of our current Strategic Plan. Moving from rural to Rockwood will make for positive outcomes from this very challenging situation.

If this excellent school has nowhere else to go and must cease operations in the new building, hundreds, if not thousands of children (considering the impact this will have on several other charter schools statewide) will be put into their local elementary schools. Schools that are already bursting at the seams with sky high classroom numbers while simultaneously hemorrhaging teachers due to the environment of the last few years. Our children's education and spirit took a big enough hit with Covid restrictions these past few years, it's time we started showing up for them and supporting them in all their educational endeavors.

Please allow this 14 year old charter school to continue offering free, quality education to Oregon students. There are few accessible charter school options in East Portland and East Multnomah County-- please support these endeavors. Thank you for your time.