

To the Senate Committee On Education

I oppose SB 767. Two of my three children attend Lewis and Clark Montessori Charter School. I have called Lewis and Clark my children's second home for the last four and a half years. I moved my oldest child from our local school to Lewis and Clark because of the lack of safety she felt every day attending school. I brought my concerns to the school, and they responded that it's not only happening to my child but that they are working on finding solutions. However, my child came home every day crying. I felt like the school and staff weren't taking my concern seriously. After speaking with another parent who experienced a similar situation, I moved my child to Lewis and Clark.

Since moving here, my oldest child has been thriving, growing, and feels safe to go to school every day. She is sad when she has to miss school. I feel welcomed at the school, and so does my family. As a person of color, this is very important to me because I feel connected to the school and staff. If this bill passes, it will cause more harm to my family than good.

If Lewis and Clark could stay in the Gresham Barlow School District, they would, but we are forced to relocate due to lease termination by our sponsoring district, GBSD. The school is working with a short timeline in finding a location to fit the Lewis and Clark community's needs. They have found a place that is approximately 1000 ft from GBSD. In addition, the site would be in a more diverse area allowing it to serve more populations than a rural location.

Lastly, as a parent and working professionals in the Education field, we want to see children thrive and succeed. The connection between school and home to school is vital for our children's success. I cannot imagine having the same relationship I have with Lewis and Clark somewhere else.

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony.

*Elizabeth Vasquez*