

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

Hi, as a Montessori teacher and parent, I am writing today in opposition of this bill. The Lewis & Clark Montessori Charter School is being forced to relocate due to lease termination by their sponsoring district, Gresham-Barlow School District and while it would be ideal for them to remain inside GBSD boundaries there is an extremely limited time frame and lack of existing facilities to accommodate 17 classrooms so their choices are limited. They only learned of this lease termination a few months ago so 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 that is located less than 1000 ft from the GBSD boundary. They would like to turn an unfortunate situation into a positive impact by moving from a rural location that is inaccessible by public transportation to one that opens access for enrollment to the underserved, more diverse populations in Rockwood and the surrounding area while also continuing to serve our current families. Greater access & diversity is a key component of our current Strategic Plan.

Lewis & Clark Montessori Charter School has been in existence for over 14 years and has had an incredibly positive impact on hundreds of families, educators and the greater community.

If their school has nowhere else to go and are forced to cease operations in their new building, what then? 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 their best and brightest 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. Thank you for your time.