CARLISLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS www.carlisle.k12.ma.us
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JOINT SCHOOL COMMITTEE SPECIAL EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE (SESC) AND SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SEPAC) MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, MARCH 25, 2025, 1:30 PM
SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE, CARLISLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Present – School Committee: Brian Waterson, Sharon Whitt
Present – School Administration/Personnel: Jim O'Shea, Superintendent; Dennet Sidell, Elementary Principal; Linda Vanaria, Teacher and CTA President; Mary O'Regan, Assistant to the Superintendent
Present – SEPAC Members: Jessie Pescatore, Almudena Pachec

I. Call to Order

Ms. Whitt called the meeting to order at 1:36 PM. There were introductions of all meeting attendees.

II. Update for 24-25 School Year

Mr. O'Shea invited Dr. Sidell to join the meeting to review the literacy screeners that are used at Carlisle Public School. Dr. Sidell explained that students are screened several times throughout the year in order to access multiple years of data points. Reading Specialists and Tier II Tutors assist with testing as needed. Dr. Sidell confirmed that special education students are tested. The differences between Tier 2 and Tier 3 services were discussed as well as which programs and instruction are used at each level. Mr. O'Shea shared a link with SEPAC members of a previous literacy presentation given by Dr. Sidell. There was a discussion surrounding the science of reading and the literacy "scandal" of the past few years. Information was shared about the group of "Angry Mothers" visiting the state house, state level guidance on literacy screeners, and the Sold a Story podcast.

Mr. O'Shea gave an overview of school finances as related to federal funds. It is estimated that less than 2% of the school budget comes from federal funds and at this time educators are being told funding will remain the same but flow through different organizations, not the Department of Education. Chapter 70 funds come through the state and there is the possibility that if federal funds get cut there may be a reallocation of Chapter 70 funds. Communication with the town has included concerns regarding possible federal funding cuts in the future. There was a brief review of the make up of town with regard to the number of households and voters in Carlisle that have students enrolled in the district.

SEPAC members will reach out with topic ideas for future meetings. It was suggested to include a SEPAC update at a future School Committee meeting.

III. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

IV. Adjourn

Ms. Whitt made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Waterson seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 2:36 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary O'Regan
Assistant to the Superintendent
March 25, 2025