

**CARLISLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS [www.carlisle.k12.ma.us](http://www.carlisle.k12.ma.us)  
83 School Street Carlisle, MA 01741 Phone: 978-369-6550 Fax: 978-371-2400**

**JOINT SCHOOL COMMITTEE SPECIAL EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE (SESC)  
AND SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SEPAC) MEETING  
MINUTES**

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 18, 2023  
4:00 PM, CARLISLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Present – School Committee: Amanda Comperchio, Sharon Whitt

Present – School Administration/Personnel: Jim O’Shea, Superintendent; Lori Bruce, Director of Student Support Services; Linda Vanaria, Teacher and CTA President; Mary O’Regan, Assistant to the Superintendent

Present – SEPAC Members: Meredith Bielecki, Sessa Gadey, Melissa Suderman

**I. Call to Order**

Ms. Comperchio called the meeting to order at 4:09 PM.

**II. Discussion of the podcast “Sold a Story”**

All attendees had listened to the podcast and many had reviewed related resources. Mr. O’Shea reported that a large group of the staff met last week to discuss the podcast and voiced that they want to do better now that they know better.

Discussion items included:

- During the pandemic Zoom gave parents a window into what was being taught in schools.
- The power the publishing industry has and how it gains financially.
- How research is revealing how children learn to read and the importance of phonics.
- Reading programs that were not research based were incorporated into many district curriculums.
- Assessment tools denounced in the podcast.
- Some teachers are now carrying guilt and feel that they let their students down.
- Materials (decodable books) that would enhance the phonics based curriculum currently being used in Carlisle.
- Where do we go from here? What are the next steps?

The podcast synthesized information and issues related to teaching children to read while at the same time opening the door for valuable conversations. Mr. O’Shea stated that there will be continued dialogue in the district surrounding literacy. Using the collective energy from staff will help create consensus and determine the best approach to take moving forward.

**III. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:52 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary O’Regan  
Assistant to the Superintendent  
January 18, 2023