

# Instructional Leadership Council

## Meeting Minutes for December 7, 2023

**Attendees:** Julie Barker, ~~Gina Brown~~, Angela Carpin, Dwayne Cerbone, Heather Clayton, Maribeth Curran, ~~Kathy Curtis~~, Shana Cutaia, Meredith Graham, Liz Grizzanti, John Halldow, Sarah Jacob, Amanda Kirkebye, Matt Kwiatkowski, Sheila Lecca, ~~Kate Milne~~, Jodi Orman, Mark Puma, Teresa Roets, Tish Romas, Kristin Rose, Brian Shafer, Toni Stevens-Oliver, Melanie Ward, Elizabeth Woods

**Chairperson:** Melanie Ward

**Co-Chair:** Julie Barker

**Note Taker:** Liz Norten

*Approved Minutes are on the Pittsford School District ILC webpage and members can access in Microsoft Teams.*

**Minutes from Nov 2, 2023 meeting:** Approved.

**Agenda:** Approved and noted that S. Ebert attending for K. Curtis.

**New Course Proposal – Military History (Nicole Barry):** When a new course is proposed by the standards leader, it is first presented to the Standards Leaders Team followed by the Secondary Academic Council. Each of these groups has the opportunity to provide feedback and ask questions.

If SLT and SAC support the new course proposal, it is then presented to ILC who ultimately decides whether or not to recommend the proposal to the Board of Education for consideration to add to course of studies.

Proposal: The Vietnam course will no longer be offered and will be replaced with two new courses: Early Military History\* and Modern Military History\*. If approved, the courses will run in alternate years with one section of that year's course offered each semester beginning with Modern Military History\* in 2024-2025.

Process: The social studies steering committee created a sub-committee to evaluate the current military history course offerings. Members agreed that the Vietnam course, as currently structured, is dated and has generated low enrollment. By contrast, Military History has been very popular but there is not sufficient time in the course to address more current topics. The proposal was made to eliminate the Vietnam course and replace it with Early Military History\* (Greece, Rome, Middle Ages and Napoleon) and Modern Military History\* (Civil War to current).

\*Note: The initial course names were Military History I and II but ILC members felt that might indicate a prerequisite order

*(I needs to be taken before II). The group agreed that "Early" and "Modern" were course names that were more clear.*

Feedback: Members felt that the new course proposal ties in closely with civic engagement and our Next Gen Skills and provides the opportunity to study more present-day events. They appreciate the responsiveness of the department updating the course and that teachers have discretion about how much time to spend on any conflict according to student interests.

Questions:

- What are the potential impacts on other electives (more sections could mean enrollment per section decreases and some sections not meeting required minimum to run). *This is true whether we create a new section or not and the new course may fill a gap in some schedules. At SAC there were no concerns expressed about negative effects on other electives.*
- Why not Ancient in fall and Modern in spring. *Reduces planning burden for teacher; not unusual to do this rotation.*
- Should there be a limit on the number of sections offered in a new course? *The expectation is that there will most likely be just 1 section each semester.*
- What resources are students using? *We already have a textbook that would be used for both courses in addition to articles, movies, simulations, internet sources and documentaries. Requesting \$500 to develop additional simulations.*

The ILC membership voted unanimously to recommend the addition of Early Military History and Modern Military History to the Program of Studies and that the proposal be forwarded to the BOE for their consideration.

### **Definition of Rigor:**

Rigor is an important component in our Strategic Initiative, and we need a consistent understanding of what it means. Teachers are responsible for creating rigorous learning experiences for their students and so it is critical to have a shared understanding and definition that allows us to identify rigor in the K-12 classroom in a way that is accessible to all staff.

In November, PDLT reviewed various authors/quotes/articles and came up with four possible definitions of rigor. The Superintendent has asked ILC to come up with a district definition and members participated in the following activity:

Step 1: Individual members reviewed the 4 statements of rigor generated from PDLT and identified words or phrases in each statement that were especially meaningful to them.

Step 2: ILC members paired up and shared their thinking.

Step 3: Members moved to groups of 4 to see what commonalities there were between the pairs.

Step 4: Members combined into two groups of 10 and each group produced a "statement" or belief about what rigor looks like.

Step 5: Two statements:

- Deeper understanding for each individual student. Create, discover, apply thinking (higher level Bloom's). Learner focused – rigor is a result. Consider success, confidence, perseverance, productive struggle, and the correct level of challenge.
- Rigor is the interaction between content, learner and instructional environment that creates learning experiences that challenge students toward deeper understanding to meaningfully and purposefully apply knowledge in novel situations.

ILC co-chairs will try to synthesize these ideas into one statement while considering the following contributions from ILC members:

- How does our definition of rigor apply to our grading philosophy?
- How do we maintain rigor while also ensuring equity for all?
- Difference between "hard" vs. "rigorous".
- Are we at rigor when we meet a target in the Next Gen Skills? Students engage in rigorous learning experiences but may not meet a specific target in the Next Gen Skills.
- Something that's rigorous doesn't have to be exhausting or stressful - it can be invigorating.
- What are our beliefs about test scores, sustained efforts, "excellence".

**Book Study Part II:** Postponed until January meeting.

**Constituent Sharing:** This is an opportunity for members to share feedback and updates from their constituent groups regarding work related to ILC goals:

Co-Chair: grateful for conversation at ILC every month.

Community: successful Candlelight Night; event has been held for 51 years and the last 2 years have been the most well-attended.

Special Ed: noticing significant inclusion in the school and community.

SHS: vocal, jazz and band performed at Village Hall during Candlelight Night.

BRMS: 8<sup>th</sup> grade chorus performed for retired teachers at Locust Hill.

PRE: increased involvement in student council; planning theme days, elections; very excited.

Art: planning underway for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade field trip to MAG district wide in the spring aligned to the Art standards of Connecting and Responding to art work, as well as the SEL benchmarks.

Rainbow Classic (12/22) - getting the message of the reason behind the benefit game to students; art

students making posters; over \$500,000 raised so far for Golisano Children's Hospital.

MCE: Elementary teachers just finished up report cards and teacher conferences.

CRMS: 2 social studies students just won awards.

MCE: student council had a successful food drive over Thanksgiving; school just completed the connected adult activity.

BRMS: 7<sup>th</sup> grade participating in the Junior Achievement Finance Park. Teachers are completing professional dev. through JA.

MHS: Bringing back Heritage Day in March with a possible performance component at the end of the day; 58 students going to DECA at RIT this year.

PTSA: Super Sale generated \$40,000 in net proceeds. Next year's Super Sale will be held at Nazareth and the group is in need of a Super Sale chairperson.

TRE: ILT focused on consistent procedures for addressing student behaviors particularly in the cafeteria and at recess, as well as in the classrooms.

**Share with constituent groups:**

- New course proposal Ancient Military History and Modern Military History.
- Working towards definition of rigor.

**Next Meeting:** January 11, 2024