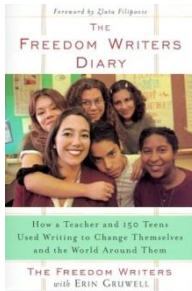


## Oriskany Alternative HS at Oneida County Jail

Quarterly Report (October 2016)

The August administration of the TASC test consisted of two students who took the full test; one student retook Reading and one student retook Math. All four students earned their HSED!! The two graduates that continued in class until we received their results published a brochure (attached) describing our program for our use during intakes. This gives potential students an in depth view of the Alternative HS program from their peers perspective.

We had an awesome opportunity to collaborate with the programs within Oneida County Jail. We joined classes with the BOCES Adult Education program for a math lesson, using Fluid Math on the SMART Board! The BOCES teacher and OAHS staff share resources and co-plan regularly. Recently OAHS met with Working Solutions, LEAP, ATI, BOCES Adult Education and Sgt. Harris. Program information was shared and a discussion for a celebratory commencement is being formulated.



Students were very inspired by The Freedom Writers Diary unit! As students read the diary entries they identified a positive character trait associated and demonstrated by the Freedom Writer. The character traits are integrated from our Career & Life Skills curriculum (professionalism, ambition, perseverance, adaptability, resilience, passion, confidence, action-oriented, triumph, responsibility, integrity, initiative, mindset, grit, character). If the Freedom Writers demonstrated a trait not listed here, students' added traits to the Freedom Writer

Parking Lot. For each of these traits, students summarized the Freedom Writer's actions to demonstrate that trait. In addition, for each year in the diary students wrote an essay choosing a diary entry that aligned with a quote that was presented (i.e., "Hope appears on the horizon each morning in the form of a brand new day."~ Unknown). Each semester was a different style of writing and students had to reflect on the entry that they chose, summarize its application to the quote and finally compare themselves to the Freedom Writer. Students were so impassioned by this particular piece of literature, that discussion carried over outside the classroom to the pods. The BOCES Adult instructor relayed that his students expressed interest in possibly reading The Freedom Writers Diary due to these discussions in the pods. As a culminating activity, the class (with the adults as guests) participated in a Skype video chat with Michael Bongiorno, an original Freedom Writer. The Oriskany Superintendent, a Board of Education member and the Pupil Personnel Director joined us for the video chat.

Michael has suffered his entire life with a triple affliction of Alcoholism, aggression and Bi-Polar/Manic Depressive disorder. From the age of 10 a deep inner battle was being waged, and vandalism, theft, and expulsions from grade school made that all too apparent. At the age of 12 a fire destroyed Michael's home, which transplanted him across the country and introduced him to a new life of heavy drinking, drug use, uncontrollable rage, wrong directions, and wrong friends. Through his teens and early 20s Michael's heavy drinking and untreated aggression fueled multiple DUIs, jail time, vehicle accidents, and ultimately kept him from holding down a job or completing college, leading to a two year stint of being homeless.

A modified version of Project Based Learning has been implemented in each subject area. Each math concept begins with a hands-on experience and followed up with skill work. Students investigate Science concepts using Discovery Learning to complete a graphic organizer of important concepts. As we progress through the historical timeline, students create different authentic products explaining the era in history. Most recently they designed posters to explain the American Government and Constitution. The discussions and collaboration that occur doing these project-based lessons are invaluable in the students' education. Students are engaged in the variety that 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills offer.