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Education, not Standardization: (What if high-stakes testing were to be abolished?)

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Education, not Standardization (What if high-stakes testing were to be abolished?)

By Joseph S. Pizzo

Imagine a restructuring
Pedagogy pulsating with praise
Pedantic practice being pushed aside
Replacing resolve with relief
Data driving authenticity
Classroom climate cleansed from storms of controversy
Inspiration igniting imagination
Comprehensiveness cradling creativity
Exploration inspiring inquiry
Discovery welcoming curiosity
Determination driving design
Nova explosions of ideas and perceptions
Perspectives challenged by process
Learning fashioned in a forge of ideas and heated exchanges
Debate
Demonstration
Delineation
Challenge
Clarity
Crystallization
Motivation, not manufacture
Thought-provocation, not threat production
Finesse, not fealty
Instruction, not intimidation
Authentication, not augmentation
Learning without largesse
Education, not standardization

Joseph S. Pizzo is in his 44th year of teaching. A 7th grade language arts teacher at Black River Middle School, NJ, he also is an adjunct professor at Centenary University and Union County College. Recently named a “Teacher Who Rocks” by WDHA 105.5 FM, Pizzo has been the NJAMLE and NJCTE Educator of the Year, serving on the executive board of both organizations. He is a Core Team and Site Visitation Member for NJ Schools to Watch and a contributing member of Drew University’s DrewTeach NJ Digital Literacies Collaborative (formerly at Fordham University). A member of NJDOE’s Council for Teaching and Learning and the Education Committee for Future Ready Schools, Pizzo is the author of Barron’s *New Jersey ELA/Literacy Test - Grade 7* and a member of both WWOR-TV Ch. 9’s A+ for Teachers and NJCTE’s Halls of Fame.