



Spectacular Things Happen Along the Way: Lessons from an Urban Classroom (Teaching for Social Justice Series)

Brian D. Schultz

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A fresh take on what happens when a teacher says enough is enough and does the unthinkable: design a curriculum based on their students' actual needs and aspirations. Flying in the face of reason, Brian Schultz did just that when he challenged his 5th grade class in urban Chicago to name a problem in their community that they wanted to solve. As the students of Room 405 focus on replacing their dilapidated school building, a historic voyage of repair and healing begins. Ultimately, it is their own questions and incredible accomplishments that make them realize their commitment and ability to change the world around them. This gem captures the remarkable transformations of everyone involved.

Spectacular Things Happen Along the Way is a significant reminder of the influence of our nation's determined teachers and what they can achieve when they go against the grain of rigid curriculums and authoritarian standardized testing. Schultz's debut work is a must-read for anyone who believes in the power of challenging convention, the authority of human compassion, and finding solutions that work for America's youth.

"Once I began reading, I couldn't put it down. The power here is in the details. It's a marvelous, important book and is badly needed at a moment when the values it upholds are under an unrelenting assault from forces of reactionary ignorance."

—**Jonathan Kozol**, author of *Amazing Grace*

"Carr Community Academy is a crumbling elementary school in Chicago next to one of the largest and most perilous public housing projects—Cabrini Green. It also is the location of one of the more spectacular fifth-grade classes in the country."

—**Ralph Nader**, consumer advocate, author, and founder, Public Citizen research group

"In a time of ever more testing and standardization, Brian Schultz demonstrates in powerful ways what the critically democratic alternative looks like. Anyone who wants to make a difference in urban education needs to read this book."

—**Michael W. Apple**, author of *Educating the "Right" Way*

"This fifth-grade class illustrates some important lessons about America: The neglect of the inner-city poor, the virtues of creative public service, of teaching to educate-not just to pass a test-and of perseverance."

—**Robert Siegel**, *All Things Considered*, National Public Radio

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