Manifesto 15

Evolving learning

A handbook for leading change

March 2016
## Contents

Welcome 3

Manifesto 15 4

  What we have learned so far 4

  Initial signatories 7

What is Manifesto 15? 8

  What Manifesto 15 is not 8

  How Manifesto 15 is intended to work 8

Leading the conversation 9

  Our digital community 9

Manifesto 15 Ambassadors 10

Hosting a workshop 11

Taking action 12

  Start a Manifesto 15 group 12

  Join the annual meeting 13

Manifesto 15 groups 14

Posters 15

  Our formula for designing posters 15

  Hanging the posters 16

  A recipe for potato paper glue 16

Glossary 17

Sample posters 19
Welcome

On January 1, 2015, Manifesto 15 was released: a statement that inspired a conversation about principles for building positive education futures, grounded on the idea that we urgently need to evolve learning. This is a public declaration of a vision for better education futures. In the months since its release, it’s been read and discussed by thousands of people, signed by hundreds, featured in various media and conferences, and teams of volunteers around the world have translated it into a growing number of languages (and visual notes!) – and the movement is growing!

We are thankful for the interest in this project and the support we have received around the world. This handbook presents some guidelines on how we can move forward, including hosting conversations, workshops, and starting local Manifesto 15 groups.

Please take Manifesto 15 as a starting point, and build in your own ideas and practices. Or, create and share your own sets of principles. The manifesto and the emerging movement is open for discussion, remixing, and sharing – and we encourage you to drive the conversation with your own networks.

This handbook is an invitation to join us and build community, centered on trust and open dialogue, as we work to change the face of education.

Thank you,

John Moravec, PhD
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Manifesto 15

January 1, 2015

Many of the most inspiring documents are strongly associated with a date. The U.S. Declaration of Independence was signed on July 4, 1776; Charter 77 emerged in January 1977; Dogme 95 was crafted in 1995. Ideas transform and develop over time. This manifesto represents a snapshot of our ideas, visions for the future, and what we have learned to date about learning and education. This text serves as a reference point to help us understand how we’ve done so far and what actions we need to take next.

\textit{In a world consumed with uncertainty and a growing sense of the obsolescence of our education systems, how can we ensure the success of ourselves as individuals, our communities, and the planet?} We need to evolve education.

What we have learned so far

1. \textit{“The future is already here – it's just not very evenly distributed”} (William Gibson in Gladstone, 1999). The field of education lags considerably behind most other industries largely from our tendency to look backward, but not forward. We teach the history of literature, for example, but not the future of writing. We teach historically important mathematical concepts, but do not engage in creating new maths needed to build the future. Moreover, everything “revolutionary” taking place in learning has already happened at different scales, in bits and pieces, at different places. The full impacts for ourselves and our organizations will be realized when we develop the courage to learn from each others’ experiences, and accept the risk and responsibility in applying a futures orientation in our praxis.

2. \textbf{1.0 schools cannot teach 3.0 kids.} We need to redefine and build a clear understanding of what we are educating for, why we do it, and for whom our educational systems serve. Mainstream compulsory schooling is based on an outdated, 18th century model for creating citizens with the potential to become loyal, productive factory workers and bureaucrats. In the post-industrial era, this should no longer be the end goal of education. We need to support learners to become innovators, capable of leveraging their own imagination and creativity to realize new outcomes for society. We do this because today’s challenges cannot be solved through old thinking. And, we are all co-responsible for creating futures with positive outcomes that benefit all people in the world.

3. \textbf{Kids are people, too.} All students must be treated and respected as human beings with recognized, universal human rights and responsibilities. This means students must have an active say in the choices regarding their learning, including how their schools are run, how and when they learn, and all other areas of everyday life. This is inclusion in a real sense. Students of all ages must be afforded liberties to pursue educational opportunities and approaches for learning that are appropriate for them, as long as their
decisions do not infringe on the liberties of others to do the same (adapted from EUDEC, 2005).

4. **The thrill of jumping off a cliff by deciding to do so yourself is a high you will never have if someone else pushes you off of it.** In other words, the top-down, teacher-student model of learning does not maximize learning as it devours curiosity and eliminates intrinsic motivation. We need to embrace flat, horizontalized, and distributed approaches to learning, including peer learning and peer teaching, and empower students to realize the authentic practice of these modes. Educators must create space to allow students to determine if, and when, to jump off the cliff. Failing is a natural part of learning where we can always try again. In a flat learning environment, the teacher’s role is to help make sure the learner makes a well-balanced decision. Failing is okay, but the creation of failures is not.

5. **Don’t value what we measure, measure what we value.** In our obsession over testing, we have somehow allowed the OECD to become the “world’s ministry of education” through the PISA regime, and the cult of educational measurement is spreading throughout the world. At a national, state-to-state level, it is as if we are competing to be the best-looking kid in a humdrum family. Even worse, our schools are producing politicians and policy leaders that do not know how to interpret test scores. The best innovations are often killed the moment we start worrying about measurement. We need to put an end to compulsory testing and reinvest these resources into educational initiatives that create authentic value and opportunities for growth.

6. **If “technology” is the answer, what was the question?** We seem to obsess over new technologies while having little understanding of what they’re for or how they can impact learning. Technologies are great for doing what we have been doing better, but using new technologies to do the same old stuff in the classroom is a lost opportunity. Black boards have been replaced by whiteboards and SMART Boards. Books have been replaced by iPads. This is like building a nuclear plant to power a horse cart. Yet, nothing has changed, and we still focus tremendous resources on these tools, and squander our opportunities to exploit their potential to transform what we learn and how we do it. By recreating practices of the past with technologies, schools focus more on managing hardware and software rather than developing students’ mindware and the purposive use of these tools.

7. **Digital skills are invisible, and so should technologies be in schools.** *Invisible learning* is a recognition that most of the learning we do is “invisible” – that is, it is through informal, non-formal, and serendipitous experiences rather than through formal instruction (Cobo & Moravec, 2011). It takes into account the impact of technological advances to enable the invisible spaces to emerge – but, like the spaces, the use of technologies is likewise invisible and fluid. If the challenge for our schools and governments is to create students that stand out in creativity and innovation, and not students that mindlessly memorize and repeat old ideas, any use of technologies for learning must enable these creative and innovative directions. Schools should not use computers to “do work” around preassigned parameters with prescribed outcomes; they should be used to help design and create products and learning outcomes that extend beyond the imagination of the curriculum. Rather than putting technology in the forefront and obscuring learning, make it invisible yet
ambient, enabling learners to discover their own pathways for development with these tools.

8. **We cannot manage knowledge.** When we talk about knowledge and innovation, we frequently commingle or confuse the concepts with data and information instead. Too often, we fool ourselves into thinking that we give kids knowledge, when we are just testing them for what information they can repeat. To be clear: Data are bits and pieces here and there, from which we combine into *information*. Knowledge is about taking information and creating meaning at a personal level. We *innovate* when we take action with what we know to create new value. Understanding this difference exposes one of the greatest problems facing school management and teaching: While we are good at managing information, we simply cannot manage the knowledge in students' heads without degrading it back to information.

9. **“The network is the learning”** (Siemens, 2007). The emerging pedagogy of this century isn’t carefully planned. Rather, it’s developed fluidly. Our traversals across networks are our pathways to learning, and as the network expands, so does our learning. In connectivist approaches to learning, we connect our individual knowledges together to create new understandings. We share our experiences, and create new (social) knowledge as a result. We must center on the ability of individuals to navigate this space and make connections on their own, discovering how their unique knowledge and talents can be contextualized to solve new problems.

10. **The future belongs to nerds, geeks, makers, dreamers, and knowmads.** While not everybody will or should become an entrepreneur, those who do not develop entrepreneurial skills are at a great disadvantage. Our education systems should focus on the development of *entreprenerds*: individuals who leverage their specialized knowledge to dream, create, make, explore, learn and promote entrepreneurial, cultural, or social endeavors, taking risks and enjoying the process as much as the final outcome, without fearing the potential failures or mistakes that the journey includes.

11. **Break the rules, but understand why, clearly, first.** Our school systems are built on cultures of obedience, enforced compliance, and complacency. The creativities of students, staff, and our institutions are inherently stultified. It is easier to be told what to think than to think ourselves. Openly asking questions, and building a metacognitive awareness of what we have created and what we would like to do about it, can best cure this institutionalized malaise. Only then can we engineer justified breaks from the system that challenge the status quo and have the potential to create real impact.

12. **We must and can build cultures of trust in our schools and communities.** As long as our education systems continue to be based on fear, anxiety, and distrust, challenges to all of the above will continue. In the *Minnevate!* project (MASA, 2014), the researchers found that if educators are to build a collective capacity to transform education, we need engaged communities, and we also need to *engage with* the communities we serve. This requires a new theory of action, **centered on trust**, where students, schools, governments, businesses, parents, and communities may engage in collaborative initiatives to co-create new education futures.
Some say these principles require a revolution to be realized. Others say we need massive innovation to make positive education futures a reality. We believe we need both, or as Ronald van den Hoff (2013) says: “What we really need is an innovution!” (p. 236). And, this is our noble quest: To innovute with not only our ideas, but also the purposive applications of what we have learned through our individual efforts, and together, globally.

Initial signatories

We are: John Moravec, PhD, Education Futures (principal author, USA); Daniel Araya, PhD, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (USA); Daniel Cabrera, MD, Mayo Clinic (USA); Alexandra Castro, Westhill Institute (Mexico); Cristóbal Cobo, PhD, Fundación Ceibal (Uruguay); Guido Crolla, HAN University of Applied Sciences (Netherlands); Chloé Duff, European Democratic Education Community (UK); Maaike Eggermont, Sudbury School Ghent (Belgium); Martine Eyzenga, Diezijnvaardig (Netherlands); José García Contto, Universidad de Lima (Peru); Kristin Gehrmann, Demokratische Schule München (Germany); Peter Gray, PhD, Boston College (USA); Renske de Groot, arts educator (Netherlands); Leif Gustavson, PhD, Pacific University (USA); Peter Hartkamp, The Quantum Company (Netherlands); Christel Hartkamp-Bakker, PhD, Newschool.nu (Netherlands); Pekka Ihanainen, Haaga-Helia School of Vocational Teacher Education (Finland); Aaron Keohane, Summerhill School (UK); Nicola Kriesel, BFAS e.V. (Germany); Beatriz Miranda, Aprendamos (Ecuador); Sugata Mitra, PhD, Newcastle University (UK); Hugo Pardo Kuklinski, PhD, Outliers School (Spain); Tomis Parker, Agile Learning Centers (USA); Angela Peñaherrera, Fraschini&Heller (Ecuador); Robert Rogers, MD, University of Maryland (USA); Carlos Scolari, PhD, Universitat Pompeu Fabra (Spain); António Teixeira, PhD, Universidade Aberta (Portugal); Stephanie Thompson, Beach Haven Primary (New Zealand); Max Ugaz, Economía Digital SAC (Peru); Evert-Jan Ulrich, Dutch Innovation School (Netherlands); Charles Warcup, Sudbury-Schule Ammersee (Germany); Monika Wernz, Sudbury-Schule Ammersee (Germany); Alex Wiedermann, Sudbury-Schule Ammersee (Germany)
What is Manifesto 15?

Manifesto 15 is a statement of principles that are intended to help us shape new approaches to schooling and the crafting of educational policy. Crucially, it presents a positive outlook in which we can all come together to build better education futures.

The manifesto emerged as a reflection by the principal author that it was time to re-center, and “get back to basics” in education. It is too easy to get distracted and lose track of our principles and where we want to go with them. It was time to write a manifesto on what we have learned so far. John Moravec started writing Manifesto 15 at the end of 2014, and opened it for public edits, contributions, and comments via Google Docs as soon as the first draft was completed. A flood of comments and responses appeared immediately, and translations into other languages submitted by volunteers appeared within hours.

The message is based on the need to challenge our assumptions. We need to understand why, how, what, and for whom we are educating. The manifesto is intended to serve as a “snapshot” of what we have learned to date in regard to creating positive education futures. We present a global perspective that is about creating futures in which we can all thrive. As more cosigners joined, it became decentered from any particular national context, and is just as much North-South as it is South-North in orientation. We are not catering to please anybody or any particular agenda. We just think that we can do better in education, and we have a vision to make it happen.

What Manifesto 15 is not

Manifesto 15 is neither a solution to the problems that face education; nor is it a list of fixes or simple actions. It is simply a “manifesto” in the truest sense: a statement of principles for how we can come together to develop solutions.

How Manifesto 15 is intended to work

The manifesto is intended to make people think, spark discussion, and inspire actions. It is an open invitation to join a conversation that we all own.

Take this document as a starting point, building in your own ideas. Or create a new manifesto that is relevant for your community. We learned that we can build a collective capacity to evolve learning, but this requires a tremendous amount of trust from all of us to realize our visions. And, we need to challenge the assumptions upon which our learning systems are built.
Leading the conversation

Manifesto 15 is intended to be thought-provoking and inspiring, with perspectives that challenge the norm — but are also backed by research and experience. It is not intended to survive as a document on its own, rather it is designed to influence the conversations of others around the world so that we may all grow and evolve our learning practices.

There are many ways to bring the manifesto to your school, office, home, and community. The simplest way is to share the website, manifesto15.org, with your networks, along with your own thoughts.

At conferences and assemblies, you may also host talks and workshops about the manifesto, using methods you view are appropriate to engage participants in discussion and the crafting of solutions. If you would like to offer others an opportunity to sign the manifesto, the international office can send you a poster-sized PDF that you can print. For more information, email: manifesto15@educationfutures.com.

If you are a student or teacher, you are invited to share the manifesto at your own school. Again, you may share the website, display the manifesto in its entirety on a poster, or get together as a group to create and display your own posters of texts and ideas that are important to you and your community. You are welcome to brand them as being a part of the Manifesto 15 movement as long as they do not interfere with the values presented in the original document.

To help you get started with your own posters, we have included a sample of posters and a style guide at the end of this handbook.

Our digital community

Facebook group: https://www.facebook.com/manifesto15.org

Twitter hashtag: #manifesto15
Manifesto 15 Ambassadors

We are looking for change makers around the world to help us spread the word about Manifesto 15.

As an Ambassador, you play a key role in building the conversation and growing the Manifesto 15 movement in your community. At Education Futures, we will help connect you with resources and ideas to help make a difference, and you will be a part of a network of like-minded Ambassadors!

Manifesto 15 Ambassadors

1. Are committed to evolving learning
2. Serve as the voice of the Manifesto 15 movement in their community
3. Design local campaigns to share the message and encourage others to take action
4. Share what they’ve learned with a global network

Examples of what Ambassadors do

1. Hand out stickers and other materials to share the Manifesto 15 vision
2. Attend community meetings and speak out on evolving learning
3. Organize meet-ups of like-minded change makers
4. Organize workshops to create an action agendas for their community
5. ... and, other activities that authentically connect the principles of Manifesto 15 with their own initiatives!

For more information, and to apply, visit: https://educationfutures.com/ambassadors
Hosting a workshop

Ambassadors and Manifesto 15 groups may host workshops around Manifesto 15 to discuss ideas, share perspectives, and identify solutions to best evolve learning. There are many reasons why hosting a workshop may be beneficial, including:

5. Develop opportunities to explain and discuss the principles of Manifesto 15 and identify an ecology of good practices for application of the principles.
6. Create communities through a shared trust by connecting and involving schools, businesses, communities, and industries through shared communication, education, and decision-making.
7. Involve political groups and influence decision-makers to create alternatives to what currently exists.

In your workshops, you are welcome to choose methods that work best for you and the groups you plan to engage. In our experience, however, the World Café approach to facilitating a discussion has been powerful in bringing people together to explore themes from the manifesto. This method leads them toward approaches for solving problems where there is no clear solution.

You can learn more about the World Café method at: http://www.theworldcafe.com

World Café workshops are centered around appreciating the diversity of individuals and groups brought to the table. Examples questions that can be explored include:

8. What examples or good practices already exist?
9. Precisely where do we want to go in the future? What are our opportunities? Specifically, what would our perfect world look like?
10. What are our next steps to make this happen, and what can we share with future Manifesto 15 workshop groups?

Finally, share the results from your workshop(s) and feed them back to the broader community. You can do this by posting findings, pictures, etc. on a webpage, through social media, etc. You are also invited to share what you have learned with the international office at manifesto15@educationfutures.com to help broaden the distribution channel of your findings.
Taking action

“Things do not change; we change.” — Henry David Thoreau

Start a Manifesto 15 group

Manifesto 15 is a document that has been contributed to the collective, public commons. It is neither a commercial product nor something that we believe any one person or organization should "own." As a document, it is intended to stand as an independent statement.

Our invitation remains open to join us and build an expanded community, centered on trust and open dialogue, as we work to change the face of education. While Manifesto 15 is not organized as a formal, international, non-governmental organization, it is a budding collective of individuals and organizations around the world. Through Manifesto 15, people get an opportunity to express their visions for education futures and inspire those around them.

Groups of five or more people are invited to form their own Manifesto 15 group to share the vision for evolving learning, lead the conversation in their own communities, start projects and initiatives, and advocate for good practices that will help realize its principles.

Manifesto 15 groups decide their own scope of action, and can take many forms. But, they are united by six core values:

1. **Democracy**: All students have a right to full democratic participation in the learning.
2. **Relevant curricula**: Schools need embrace flat, horizontalized, and distributed approaches to learning, including peer learning and peer teaching, and empower students to realize the authentic practice of these modes.
3. **Measurement**: Schools need to measure what they value, not value what they measure.
4. **Technology**: Digital skills and the use of technologies are invisible.
5. **Management**: Today’s challenges are not solved with old thinking.
6. **Engagement**: Schools need to be engaged with the communities they serve.

In lieu of organizing a formal NGO, Education Futures LLC is hosting an international office in Minneapolis, USA. New, organized groups should write to manifesto15@educationfutures.com to register themselves as part of the collective. All recognized Manifesto 15 groups will be provided with an option for an “official” manifesto15.org email address and subdomain (i.e., [your-group].manifesto15.org).

The international office can help answer your group’s questions, better connect you with the expanding network, and help align groups to resources as they become available.
Join the annual meeting

Key authors and signatories of the document will organize a meeting for the Manifesto 15 community during the IDEC@EUDEC conference in Mikkeli, Finland, June 6-10, 2016. More information: http://idec2016.org

The first annual meeting was held at the EUDEC 2015 conference in Warsaw, Poland. As one of its core outputs, this handbook was created.
Manifesto 15 groups

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+1 612 234 1231

**Manifesto 15 México**
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somece@somece.org.mx
+52 5511 8546

**Manifesto 15 Uruguay**
c/o Dr. Gustavo García Lutz and Ismael Burone
ggarcialutz@gmail.com, iburone21@gmail.com
Posters

We have created a few posters to help foster critical thinking and spark conversations. You are invited to print these and share them within your own community. If you have a particular message that you would like to spread, you may also create your own posters using our design principles.

Whatever you create, please make sure to share it with the international office, and let us know if you would like us to consider it for inclusion in this handbook as an “official” Manifesto 15 poster. Email: manifesto15@educationfutures.com.

Our formula for designing posters

1. Posters are created on Letter- or A4-sized paper, presented in portrait orientation.
2. The message should only occupy the first two-thirds of the sheet of paper. The rest is an open space for you (and others) to add your comments, contact information, etc.
3. Phrases are kept to a minimum, with simple messages.
4. The hashtag #Manifesto15 is included at the end to encourage discussion on social media channels.
5. Our preferred font for the text is Gotham, available from typography.com.
6. We use Sentinel Black for the words Manifesto 15 and the hashtag #Manifesto15, which is also available from typography.com.
Hanging the posters

11. If indoors, be kind and use masking tape – unless if you are posting on a bulletin board, in which case, you should staple your posters securely.
12. If outdoors, and if you have a right to free speech in your community, consider pasting posters to surfaces using potato paper glue, an all-natural, easy-to-make, strong paper adhesive.

A recipe for potato paper glue

1. Finely grate two large potatoes (ideally using a food processor).
2. Add a cup of water, creating a potato paste, and filter the mixture through a cheese cloth or very fine strainer.
3. Let the filtered liquid rest in a pan for about an hour.
4. Remove most of the liquid, but keep the starch that has settled to the bottom.
5. Add ½ cup (125 ml) of water and boil the starchy mixture until it thickens to a workable paste.
Glossary

Special terms used in Manifesto 15.

**Entreprnerd** – A paradigm of emerging, new workers that blend elements of being a *nerd* with *entrepreneurship*. Working definitions by Cristóbal Cobo and John Moravec are:

1. A risk-taking, highly-focused, entrepreneurial individual who engages in activities that spawns unique, new value creation in business and society. A dreamer, a maker, but often not the best communicator.

2. A person who dreams, creates, makes, explores, learn and promotes businesses or social endeavors, taking risks and enjoying the process as much as the final outcome, without fearing the potential failures or mistakes that this journey includes.

**Geek** – An intelligent person who may display a preoccupation with a particular field, often in the sciences and technology, but may also include cultural obsessions (i.e., film, theater, manga, etc.). Geeks are better integrated socially than nerds.

**Innovution** – A portmanteau of *innovation* and *revolution* coined by Ronald van den Hoff, suggesting that, to evolve learning, neither is sufficient on its own to create change. Rather, we need a blend of both.

**Invisible Learning** – A view takes into account the impact of technological advances and changes in formal, non-formal, and informal education, in addition to the “fuzzy” metaspaces in between. Invisible learning recognizes that most of what we learn is done invisibly, that is, through non-formal, informal, and serendipitous experiences, not through formal instruction. (Protoparadigm drafted by Cristóbal Cobo and John Moravec in 2011 and detailed in the book, *Aprendizaje Invisible*: http://aprendizajeinvisible.com)

**Knowmad** - A nomadic knowledge worker – that is, a creative, imaginative, and innovative person who can work with almost anybody, anytime, and anywhere. Industrial society is giving way to knowledge and innovation work. Whereas industrialization required people to settle in one place to perform a very specific role or function, the jobs associated with knowledge and information workers have become much less specific in regard to task and place. Moreover, technologies allow for these new paradigm workers to work either at a specific place, virtually, or any blended combination. Knowmads can instantly reconfigure and recontextualize their work environments, and greater mobility is creating new opportunities. (Term coined by John Moravec in 2003 and detailed in the book, *Knowmad Society*: http://knowmadsociety.com)

**Nerd** – An intelligent, eccentric person who is obsessed with a particular field, often in areas of science and technology, frequently at the expense of “normal” social integration.
OECD - Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. The OECD is an international economic organization of 34 countries, founded in 1961 to stimulate economic progress and world trade.

PISA - Programme for International Student Assessment. PISA is a worldwide study by the OECD in member and non-member nations of 15-year-old school pupils' scholastic performance on mathematics, science, and reading. Its purpose is to help improve education policies and outcomes. Critics contend, however, that its use as a standardized, comparative test and reporting of data are misunderstood by policy leaders.
Sample posters
“THE FUTURE
IS ALREADY HERE
IT’S JUST VERY
UNEVENLY DISTRIBUTED”
WILLIAM GIBSON

#Manifesto15
1.0 SCHOOLS
CANNOT TEACH
3.0 KIDS

#Manifesto15

MANIFESTO15.ORG
KIDS

ARE PEOPLE

TOO

#Manifesto15

MANIFESTO15.ORG
THE THRILL

OF JUMPING OFF A CLIFF BY DECIDING TO DO SO YOURSELF IS A HIGH YOU WILL NEVER HAVE IF SOMEONE ELSE PUSHES YOU OFF OF IT

#Manifesto15
DON’T VALUE WHAT WE MEASURE

MEASURE WHAT WE VALUE

#Manifesto15
IF “TECHNOLOGY”
IS THE ANSWER
WHAT WAS THE QUESTION?

#Manifesto15
DIGITAL SKILLS
ARE INVISIBLE
AND SO SHOULD TECHNOLOGIES BE IN SCHOOLS

#Manifesto15
WE CANNOT
MANAGE
KNOWLEDGE

#Manifesto15

MANIFESTO15.ORG
“THE NETWORK IS THE LEARNING”
GEORGE SIEMENS

#Manifesto15

MANIFESTO15.ORG
THE FUTURE BELONGS TO NERDS GEEKS MAKERS DREAMERS AND KNOWMADS

#Manifesto15
BREAK THE RULES
BUT UNDERSTAND WHY CLEARLY FIRST

#Manifesto15

MANIFESTO15.ORG
WE MUST AND CAN BUILD CULTURES OF TRUST IN OUR SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES

#Manifesto15
WHAT ARE WE EDUCATING FOR?

WHY DO WE DO IT?

FOR WHOM IS THIS SUPPOSED TO BENEFIT?

#Manifesto15

MANIFESTO15.ORG
FAILING

IS A NATURAL PART OF LEARNING

NOT THE CREATION OF FAILURES

#Manifesto15
COMPULSORY TESTING SEEKS THE BEST-LOOKING KID IN AN UGLY FAMILY

#Manifesto15

MANIFESTO15.ORG
MANAGING KNOWLEDGE IN THE CLASSROOM SIMPLY DEGRADES IT TO INFORMATION

#Manifesto15
WE DON’T NEED A REVOLUTION

OR AN INNOVATION

WE NEED BOTH — AN INNOVATION

RONALD VAN DEN HOFF

#Manifesto15

MANIFESTO15.ORG