



# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PUBLIC POLICY

Conditions for the offer of quality  
education



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## INTRODUCTION

This document presents policy recommendations aimed at promoting a holistic and changemaker education. They are based on the accumulated experience of schools and other educational organizations participating in the [Schools2030 program in Brazil](#).

Schools2030 is a global program that utilizes approaches such as Human Centered Design and Action-research to create new parameters for the assessment of learning, based on the practice of holistic and changemaker education. The program aims to ensure the UN's Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4), for inclusive, equitable, and quality education, such as promotion of lifelong learning opportunities for all.

In the implementation of Schools2030 in Brazil, a Researcher Collective was formed in which about 100 educational organizations develop Action-research activities. Most of them are public schools located in vulnerable territories, covering the five regions of the country, in large urban centers, small towns, rural and indigenous communities, covering all stages of Brazil's basic education system.

Throughout this document we use the term "Brazil's basic education system" that encompassess all levels from early childhood education to upper secondary education. According to OECD specification:

Education is a social right in Brazil and the country's Federal Constitution guarantees access to free public education at all levels. Brazil divides its education system into basic and higher education levels. The basic level includes: early childhood education (ISCED 0, and in Portuguese, *ensino infantil*); primary and lower secondary education (ISCED 1 and 2, also known in the country as elementary education, and in Portuguese, *ensino fundamental*); and upper secondary education (ISCED 3, and in Portuguese, *ensino médio*) (...). Compulsory education starts at the age of four, in pre-school education, and lasts 14 years, up until the end of upper secondary education. (OECD, 2021)

To summarize, the following recommendations emanate from this field of different educational experiences in the country, from the trajectory and results already achieved by this group of diverse organizations. Their final format was prepared by the program's Coordination Team, composed by Ashoka and University of Sao Paulo.

## EDUCATIONAL POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

**Recommendation 1** - The Ministry of Education and the Secretaries responsible for providing the different levels of Brazil's basic education system, must subsidize with specialized technical, financial, and institutional support (particularly working hours of professionals) the elaboration and implementation of research projects led by schools, regarding their own practices, so that the people who are part of them can reflect about what they do. Such measures must consider the specificities of children, youth, and adults in the collective production of knowledge in order to contribute to educational activities and evaluation processes.

**Justification** - Education constantly raises the need for actions to increase its quality, and there is a broad consensus about the key role educators play in this challenge. But these professionals face great difficulties in rigorously and systematically reflecting on the education they practice, mainly because they do not have consistent support to meet the demands of a balanced understanding of their activities and realities. The offer of this support - in forms of hiring, remuneration and professional careers - will favor the collective character and the sustainability of educational projects; the desired integration between higher education and Brazil's basic education system, at the same time it will create conditions for the growing engagement of professionals in the improvement of the education they provide. It is also an opportunity for central offices to learn from the practices of innovative educational organizations and to promote broad participation in the development of educational policies.

Based on the experience of the Schools2030 program in Brazil, it can be seen that, in the country, cases of support, such as that of the Municipal Secretary of Education of Belo Horizonte, are minority. This Secretary of Education held an Educational Week with 75,000 participants, created a web portal, and encouraged the exchange between members of the [Changemaker Schools Program](#) in dialogue with renowned specialists in the field. It also established a more appropriate format for the technical staff of each school (consisting of: principal, vice-principal, general pedagogical coordinator, coordinator of holistic education and one coordinator per term). The Secretary, aiming at the collective reflection of educators in its network, organized two congresses on school's best practices, which brought together about 600 people in each event. Finally, it is worth mentioning the digital publication *"Percursos Curriculares e trilhas de*

*aprendizagens para a rede municipal de Belo Horizonte em tempos de pandemia*<sup>1</sup>. The document was prepared during the pandemic and counted with the participation of teachers of the municipal educational network and with advice from the Federal University of Minas Gerais.

The Secretary of Education of Manaus initiated a pilot project on holistic education and a seminar about it with teachers and administrators in 2016. They also held a forum about holistic education in 2017. In 2019, they started a project to bring family and school together and created an educational mentoring program to support teachers in probationary internships. They also started to periodically hold three-day meetings between teachers alongside partners from educational universities for their professional training.

The state school system of Bahia is one of those that comply with the prescription of one third of the teaching journey for activities outside the classroom, an important condition for educators to also dedicate themselves to research their own educational practice. This is a very necessary step, although it is not enough to conduct thorough research in the schools and to guarantee that the knowledge produced locally can be widely disseminated and used to feed back into public policies.

For its part, the Secretary of Education of Guarulhos identifies changemaking practices in the school network and encourages their continuity and sharing through educational documentation, publications, and through the Education Portal of Guarulhos. In this digital portal teachers have the opportunity to share their practices.

Cieja-CL (Integrated Center for Youth and Adult Education, Campo Limpo district, São Paulo, SP, Brazil) has a weekly moment for teachers' reflection, which eventually involves the participation of invited specialists. In a single day, teachers and pedagogical coordinators work on planning and organizing the weekly activities. At this moment the richness of the exchange among all the school periods happens. This does not usually occur in regular schools.

Another educational unit, the Municipal School of Early Childhood Education Monteiro Lobato, in the same city, has accumulated productive experiences with partnerships of specialists from universities. They are hired with a punctual municipal budget, taking advantage of an hour and a half every two weeks for teachers' reflection. While the

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<sup>1</sup> The translation of the title is as follows: "Curricular Pathways and learning trails for the municipal network of Belo Horizonte in times of pandemic".

contribution of central offices is scarce in the efforts of schools to reflect and practice the perspective of a holistic and changemaker education, these partnerships strengthen the school's relationship with such agencies. This process can be supported by the resolution of the Municipal Education Council of São Paulo, that points out the importance of encouraging meetings to share the educational network's innovative experiences with other schools. This resolution values spaces "for experimentation, research and collective development of educational policies".

**Recommendation 2** - The Secretaries of Education responsible for providing the different levels of Brazil's basic education system should map, support, and disseminate within their network procedures and evaluation instruments developed by schools that consider the specificities of children, youth, and adults and cover the learning necessary for the full development of the person, such as empathy, collaboration, self-knowledge, creativity, and protagonism. The diffusion of these procedures and instruments must be accompanied by continuous training processes for their qualified implementation.

**Justification** - Article 205 of the Federal Constitution establishes three major objectives for Brazilian education: the full development of the person, his or her preparation for the exercise of citizenship, and his or her qualification for work. The attention to these objectives has been gradually assimilated into proposals from the perspective of holistic and changemaker education, not reduced to the adoption of full-time education at schools. However, besides governmental educational evaluation systems not considering learning related to the various dimensions of the human being, only occasionally does a decisive factor in the quality of education actually happen: people who directly perform the educational practices (students and educators) are also subjects of their evaluation.

In the Schools2030 program in Brazil there are establishments that follow this path. Among these is the State School of Professional Education Alan Pinho Tabosa (Pentecoste, Ceará, CE, Brazil), where the Individual Academic and Cooperative Performance Index (IDACI) was created, a prototype to evaluate the level of cooperation of each student while valuing and stimulating cooperation, interdependence, empathy, besides reinforcing the importance of participating in class to learn. They use cooperative and supportive learning with students interacting in rotating cells of 3 members.

The Municipal Department of Education of Almirante Tamandaré, in the State of Paraná, created, in the context of the pandemic, the Peer Group, which consisted of gathering

teachers of specific age groups in monthly diagnostic meetings, defining learning objectives, elaborating indicators to be produced and presented in semi-annual descriptive reports. During the suspension period of in person classes, the Peer Group allowed the 33% working hour, a difficulty of many municipalities that do not have a full staff, and also strengthened the relationship among teachers. They, after the return of in person classes, still meet to think collectively about the pedagogical practice and ensure the equity and quality of the evaluation process. This proposal becomes effective through the mediation of the pair that is responsible for managing schools, composed of the Principal and the Pedagogical Coordinator, who make the actions planned in the Peer Groupings possible and carry out the necessary steps for the consolidation of learning. The School Prof. Angela Antonia Misga de Oliveira is one of the institutions in Almirante Tamandaré where the evaluation process mobilizes different groups and teachers in a project of community interest, also including the view of all children.

The same is done at Nossa Senhora do Carmo School (Bananeiras, Paraíba, PB, Brazil), where the curriculum is built based on the students' curiosities and community demands, organized around roadmaps and research projects that unite curiosity, knowledge areas, and skills. In each script, everyone - students, teachers, and family members - evaluate the process and the skills worked on. The header of each script already describes the necessary values (to strengthen the process of knowledge construction, as well as knowledge for life), defined by the entire school community. These values constitute a Referential Learning Matrix, including empathy, responsibility, autonomy, self-knowledge, respect, interaction and collaboration, concentration, creativity, affectivity, self-care, among others.

The Odé Kayodê Pluricultural School (Goiás City, Goiás, GO, Brazil), proposes, among several devices, assessment exercises so that students can deal well with assessment processes in their lives outside school. Learning at Odé Kayodê is a process that considers the integrality of the child - an active subject of its process of interpreting and learning concepts, attitudes, values, and knowledge. Thus, the exercise of learning and the evaluation process are closely linked to the theoretical and methodological bases developed. In this sense, learning develops fruitfully through diversity conceived as a wealth of possibilities and leads to the application of varied instruments that help in this process of evaluation to recognize the strengths and also where it is still necessary to move forward. Therefore, the evaluation processes are not intended to be a standardization of learning.

In Guarulhos municipality, schools do not use evaluation by grades or concepts, but descriptive reports. The Secretary of Education holds meetings with the school principals, vice-principals, teachers, and pedagogical coordinators, to discuss the actions taken in their educational territories. Among the objectives is the evaluation in process, giving new meaning to the planning of pedagogical experiences.

Universities are also configured as an important agent in the construction of process of evaluations, as in the project "Covid-19: precarious areas and territorial interventions", which involved 61 municipal and state schools in the capital of São Paulo, including some from the Schools2030 program, to research study conditions of students in the pandemic, in a scenario of social vulnerability. The São Paulo municipal elementary schools Pedro Fukuye and Professor Antônio Duarte de Almeida, for example, opened themselves up for interaction with the territory, in a listening and at the same time self-knowledge process. Unifesp and UFABC contributed to the elaboration of the evaluation questionnaire and in the systematization.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

In 2022, the results of three years of Schools2030 are being consolidated and the main objective is to influence the public debate on education which, to a large extent, is permeated by questions about the quality and success of educational systems. This document is part of the actions around which we intend to establish a productive dialogue with civil society and public authorities.

The program's commitments bring a particular vision of educational quality and the recommendations are anchored on two principles that condition the issues related to educational quality: **integrality** and **changemaking**.

### Holistic Education

The official document of the Common National Curricular Base (BNCC), in its pedagogical foundations, establishes a strong commitment to holistic education:

In this context, the BNCC explicitly states its commitment to **holistic education**. Thus, it recognizes that Brazil's basic education system should aim at the formation and development of the human being as a whole, which implies understanding the complexity and non-linearity of this development, breaking with reductionist views that favor either the intellectual (cognitive) or the affective dimension. It also means taking a plural, singular, and holistic view of the child, the adolescent, the youth, and the adult - considering them as learning subjects - and promoting an education aimed at welcoming, recognizing, and fully developing their singularities and diversities. Moreover, the school, as a space for learning and inclusive democracy, must strengthen itself in the coercive practice of non-discrimination, non-prejudice and respect for differences and diversities. (BRASIL, 2017, p. 14, emphasis in original, our translation)

What does it mean to propose a holistic character for education? The BNCC contributes, in its own way, to the topic. It is worth remembering that the construction and promotion of holistic education in Brazil has a long history. It is agreed that the "Manifesto dos Pioneiros da Educação Nova" (Manifesto of the Pioneers of New Education), published in 1932, raised holistic education to a public concern. In the 1950s, with the creation of the "Escolas-Parque" (Park-Schools), without yet being called holistic education, some of its principles emerged in a concrete initiative: expansion of times, spaces, subjects, and educational opportunities and, it is worth mentioning, to provide a greater dialogue between educational organizations and the community, also connecting the educational process to the concrete life of its participants.

In the 1980s, strongly inspired by the "Escolas-Parque" (Park-Schools), the "Centros Integrados de Educação Pública - CIEPs" (Integrated Centers of Public Education - CIEPs) were implemented and articulated in the same public equipment. In these Centers, besides the usual school routine, actions focused on sports, culture, social assistance, food security and health were also promoted. Throughout the 1990s and 2000s, several initiatives with a similar vision emerged, such as the "Centros Educacionais Unificados - CEUs" (Unified Education Centers - CEUs), and the "Mais Educação" (More Education) program, launched by the federal government in 2007 and inspired by the concept of "Bairro-Escola" (Neighborhood-School).

The program "Mais Educação" was conceived as an inducer of policies and practices of holistic education. However, it went beyond that and ended up promoting ample space for debate and experimentation of new arrangements and educational possibilities, in

other words, it promoted innovation in education. From this program, aiming to support managers interested in the topic, in 2012, was created the "Centro de Referências em Educação Integral" (Center of References in Holistic Education), according to which:

Holistic education has been built by the Brazilian movement that gained strength in the late 1990s, as a concept that proposes to constitute inclusive and emancipatory educational policies and practices. By placing the student and his development at the center of the educational process, recognizing him as a social, historical, competent, and multidimensional subject, holistic education has contributed to reconnect the meaning of school and education with his life. (2017, p. 16, our translation).

We now offer a possible definition for holistic education, based on the brief history presented above:

Education is a continuous and permanent process, from birth to the end of life, and occurs in all environments where people relate to each other. Schooling represents an important part of this process, because it has the intentionality to educate and is the great depository of this responsibility by society. But for people to develop holistically - in their intellectual, physical, affective, social, and cultural dimensions - it is necessary to integrate all social agents and sectors involved in proposals that dialogue with their historical and territorial contexts. (FEUSP; ASHOKA; NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION, 2019, p. 11, our translation).

## Changemaking

Besides the policies on holistic education, Brazil also has a long and strong history in popular education, both as an experience of social movements and as a reference for the training of educators. In the 1970s, in exile, Paulo Freire, patron of Brazilian education, published his most successful book: "Pedagogy of the Oppressed". The book expresses all the beauty of his pedagogy committed to the freedom of those who suffer: the oppressed, the people. Finally, he dedicated it to "the ragged of the world and to those who discover themselves in them". It is a pedagogy of liberation, in which educators assume the role of collaborating with the conscientization and liberation of the oppressed class. Education raises the consciousness of the oppressed who, in turn,

transforms their reality. This establishes an education committed to social transformation. The subjects of education (both educators and students) become agents of change.

The efforts undertaken by thinkers, educators and members of social movements echoed, as they did with holistic education, in the actions of educational policy makers, causing some current reformist actions to appropriate this discussion. Besides the BNCC being inspired by the proposal of holistic education, it also recognizes the transforming capacity of the students, although in a more timid way:

And more, that ensures students are protagonists of their own schooling process, recognizing them as legitimate interlocutors on curriculum, teaching and learning. It means, in this sense, ensuring them an education that, in line with their paths and histories, allows them to define their life project, both regarding study and work as well as regarding the choices of healthy, sustainable and ethical lifestyles. (BRASIL, 2017, p. 463, our translation).

The BNCC qualifies the changemaker power of students with the terms: "critical", "creative", "autonomous", "responsible". It states that schools will be responsible for offering experiences that ensure the necessary learning for reading reality, making ethical decisions and facing the new challenges of contemporaneity (social, economic and environmental). These are legitimate desires and they are in dialogue with our proposal for a changemaker education. The limiting question is how these principles verified in the BNCC in fact guide the processes of curriculum construction.

The achievement of a changemaker education gave rise to the program "Escolas Transformadoras" (Changemaker Schools), an Ashoka initiative that integrates the "Movimento de Inovação na Educação - MIE" (Movement for Innovation in Education - MIE). It stems from the vision that everyone can be a changemaker of society and that educational organizations are a privileged space to provide events that contribute to the development of people with a sense of responsibility for the world. In other words, every educational organization committed to changemaker education believes that children and young people are able to take an active role in the necessary changes, and acts to create the conditions for the exercise of this potential. In short, the "Escolas Transformadoras" (Changemaker Schools) program seeks to expand the social demand for this type of education.

Differing from the majority view present in official documents of reformist initiatives, we propose that changemaker education is that which:

It recognizes the power of students, teachers, and schools, who face the socio-environmental challenges of the present and promote social justice to generate positive transformations in society. The realization of this potential becomes even more urgent in the contemporary world, marked by constant transformation, in which rules, hierarchies, and institutionalities become less and less effective, but in which technology expands the incidence of people and collectives in social processes. (FEUSP; ASHOKA; NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION, 2019, p. 11, our translation).

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