

INITIAL ASPECTS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW HIGH SCHOOL IN THE STATE OF MATO GROSSO

ASPECTOS INICIAIS DA IMPLEMENTAÇÃO DO NOVO ENSINO MÉDIO NO ESTADO DE MATO GROSSO

ASPECTOS INICIALES DE LA IMPLEMENTACIÓN DE UNA NUEVA ESCUELA SECUNDARIA EN EL ESTADO DE MATO GROSSO

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ABSTRACT: The objective of the article is to understand how the implementation of the New High School model (Novo Ensino Médio, or NEM) is developed in the State of Mato Grosso (MT), according to current characteristics in 2020. The implementation of the NEM involves rules, federal relations, and relations among bureaucratic agents, which are analyzed from Political Science reference, especially the binomial ambiguity-conflict (Matland, 1995) and the view of public policy as an incremental process (Lindblom, 1979). It is possible to observe that the implementation of the NEM has two results with important characteristics: i. it happens in an experimental context, allowed by ambiguity of NEM's rules that accept different interpretations, and by low criticism of state agents about the necessity of the reform; and ii. it happens in a specific manner, focusing on expanding ongoing initiatives and those that fit to Education Ministry's proposals. In this sense, in MT, the NEM was marked by a series of previous actions that took place by induction and incentive of the Federal Government.

KEYWORDS: New High School. Implementation. Mato Grosso.

RESUMO: O artigo tem como objetivo compreender como se desenvolve a implementação do Novo Ensino Médio (NEM) no Estado do Mato Grosso (MT), segundo características vigentes em 2020. A implementação do NEM envolve regras, relações federativas e entre atores burocráticos, que são analisadas a partir de referenciais da Ciência Política, notadamente do binômio ambiguidade-conflito (MATLAND, 1995) e da visão de política pública como processo incremental (LINDBLUM, 1979). O estudo observou que a implementação do NEM tem dois resultados marcantes i. realiza-se em um contexto de natureza experimental, propiciado pela ambiguidade das regras, que permitem interpretações diferentes, e pelo baixo questionamento dos atores estaduais sobre a necessidade da reforma; e ii. acontece de forma pontual, priorizando a expansão de iniciativas em curso e aderentes às propostas do Ministério da

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Educação – MEC. Nesse sentido, em MT, o NEM foi marcado por ações prévias que aconteceram por indução e incentivo do Governo Federal.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Novo Ensino Médio. Implementação. Mato Grosso.*

RESUMEN: *El objetivo del artículo es comprender cómo se desarrolla reforma de la enseñanza secundaria en el estado de Mato Grosso (MT), de acuerdo con las características presentes en 2020. La implementación estatal de esta reforma involucra reglas, relaciones federativas y actores burocráticos, que son analizadas a partir de referencias de Ciencias Políticas, en particular el binomio ambigüedad-conflicto (Matland, 1995) y la visión de las políticas públicas como un proceso incremental (Lindblom, 1979). Se observa que la implementación de la reforma en el estado tiene dos resultados sobresalientes: i. se desarrolla en un contexto experimental, proporcionado por la ambigüedad de las reglas de la reforma, que permiten diferentes interpretaciones, y por el bajo cuestionamiento de los actores estatales sobre la necesidad de reforma; y ii. ocurre de manera puntual, priorizando la ampliación de iniciativas en curso que se adhieren a las propuestas del MEC. En ese sentido, en MT, el NEM estuvo marcado por acciones previas que ocurrieron por inducción e incentivo del Gobierno Federal.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Reforma de la Enseñanza Secundaria. Implementación. Mato Grosso*

Introduction

In September 2016, the Provisional Measure No. 746 was enacted (BRAZIL, 2016), which instituted the reform of high school and proposed two substantial changes: the expansion of the workload for the implementation of a full-time high school and the diversification of the school curriculum, through the inclusion of five formative itineraries: I - languages and their technologies; II - mathematics and their technologies; III - nature sciences and their technologies; IV - applied humanities and social sciences; V - technical and vocational training (Article 36 of law No. 13. 415 of 2017), whose definition should be carried out in alignment with the Common National Curricular Base (BNCC in the Portuguese acronym) (BRAZIL, 2018a) and according to local realities and the capacities of each education system.

Considering the changes proposed by the so-called New High School (NEM in the Portuguese acronym), the autonomy of the states to adhere, or not, to the national policy, and the asymmetries between the technical, bureaucratic, and financial capacities of the states, this study has as its main objective to understand how the implementation of the NEM in the state of Mato Grosso (MT).

Other than the study by Lotta, Bauer, Rojas, and Jobim (2021), no other research was identified that focused on the analysis of the implementation of high school reform by Brazilian

states. The authors sought to understand how the exogenous change promoted by the federal high school reform affected and was affected by the state implementation contexts. Based on the analysis of empirical data on the changes in secondary education, pre-MP 746 (BRASIL, 2016) and in Law 13.415 (BRASIL, 2017), the authors characterize two groups of states according to the degree of incidence, scope, and institutionalization of the changes practiced. The first, covers the states that had previous incipient experiences of change in secondary education. The second, those that have had experiences with more radical changes, more institutionalized or with greater coverage in the network. This group is divided into two subgroups, encompassing the states with previous experiences, but punctual or linked to specific themes induced by the Federal Government, and the states with a more consolidated movement of changes, and interrelated initiatives, more comprehensive, institutionalized and not only linked to federal incentives.

In line with the research of Lotta, Bauer, Rojas, and Jobim (2021), the present study also analyzes the implementation of the high school reform, but has the State of Mato Grosso (MT) as an empire. In order to understand the specific implementation context of the reform in this state and to identify the role played by previous experiences of change, this study mobilizes theoretical references on public policy implementation from the field of Political Science, still little explored in studies on public policy in the field of Education. Two main references underlie the analysis of the implementation of the New High School in the state of Mato Grosso: Matland's analytical model (1995), which defines different implementation contexts based on the relationship between the variables conflict and ambiguity, and the concept of incrementalism elaborated by Lindblom (1979).

The methodological approach adopted is qualitative and involves the analysis of official national and state documents related to the reform and interviews with high and mid-level actors⁴ of the Mato Grosso State Education Secretariat (SEE-MT). The purpose of the interviews was to identify how agents of the Mato Grosso State Education Department (SEE-MT) perceive the process of implementing reform in the state, taking into account federative and bureaucratic relations, the Federal Government's role as a driving force and the impact of the reform on the changes underway. Three educational managers from SEE-MT directly involved with the reform were interviewed, who will be named Educational Manager 1, 2 and 3, to guarantee the preservation of anonymity. GE1 belongs to the high echelon of the Secretariat, and GE2 and

⁴ The research was approved by the Ethics Committee of the institution and all the interviewed actors signed the Free and Informed Consent Form.

GE3 are mid-level officials linked to the Coordination of Secondary Education Development of the state of Mato Grosso.

Besides this introduction, the study is organized in four sections. The next section presents two subsections that address the two theoretical references adopted in the analysis of the Mato Grosso experience. The third section discusses the main results of the research and, finally, the fourth section closes the article with final considerations about the results of the study.

Theoretical references of the study

The literature on public policy implementation and the branch of public policy analysis that takes implementation as an object of research have theoretical affiliations in Public Administration and Political Science, as well as inspiration in Law and Sociology. These are recent perspectives in public policy analysis (BICHIR, 2020; LOTTA, 2019), which seek to identify the answers given by different approaches to a central question: why is there a difference between planned objectives and achieved results by public policies?

The first approach, called top-down, adopts a normative and prescriptive perspective, which emphasizes the should-be of the policy. Seeking to explain why policies fail, it proposes that implementation be analyzed based on the designed objectives (formulation) and its comparison with what was not achieved, aiming at correcting the course of implementation according to the rules defined by the policy formulation.

The main criticisms to this approach emphasize that implementation is not only an operational action, focused on formal rules, but a continuous activity that requires partial decision making, and influenced by the relationship between actors with bounded rationality and by other values that also guide their decisions. The new approach arising from these criticisms is called bottom-up, and proposes to understand implementation from the "bottom up", considering the contextual factors that affect implementation and the discretion of actors to understand and explain what actually happens in the implementation process, regardless of the expected results.

From these two approaches new analytical perspectives emerge that synthesize elements of the top-down and bottom-up approaches and develop diversified analysis models, among them Matland's Ambiguity and Conflict Model (1995). In order to elaborate a model of implementation analysis that overcomes the antinomy between top-down and bottom-up models, Matland proposes to incorporate in the implementation analysis, the point of view of

formulators and agents at central levels of decision, the role of policy target groups and their local implementers, as well as the dimensions of conflict and ambiguity, considered as elements present in variable degrees in the implementation process.

Implementation Contexts

Matland (1995) considers that both formulation and implementation are marked by some degree of conflict and ambiguity. Conflict relates to the level of agreement/disagreement of the actors on the ends and/or the means of the policy. When there is low conflict, actors agree on what should be done and how it should be done. When there is a high level of conflict, there are more obstacles and difficulties for the execution of the policy due to the actors' divergent perceptions. Ambiguity, on the other hand, manifests itself in the greater or lesser clarity of the policy objectives and, especially, in the means and procedures that should be adopted to achieve them. In this sense, ambiguity can be present in the purpose of the policy - when there is no clarity about its objectives - or in the process, when there is clarity about the objectives, but not about how to carry out actions to achieve them. Both conflict and ambiguity are manageable and can change over time. In Matland's (1995) model, the combinations between these two variables give rise to four types of implementation contexts, presented in figure 1.

Figure 1 – Types of implementation from the combination of the concepts of conflict and ambiguity

	Low conflict	High conflict
Lower Ambiguity	<p>Administrative implementation</p> <p>Resources determine results;</p> <p>Technocratic closed systems.</p>	<p>Policy implementation</p> <p>Power determines implementation;</p> <p>Open to influences;</p> <p>Attempt to ensure compliance.</p>
High ambiguity	<p>Experimental implementation</p> <p>Context determines processes;</p> <p>Many power players;</p> <p>Negotiation and creation.</p>	<p>Symbolic implementation</p> <p>New values;</p> <p>New goals;</p> <p>It depends on the strength of the coalition.</p>

Source: Matland, R. E. (1995).

When a policy presents a low degree of conflict and ambiguity, we have the administrative implementation type, where there is clear knowledge about the policy objectives and the means that should be used to achieve them. In this type of implementation, the results of the policy are predictable and homogeneous, because actions tend to be executed in a standardized way, and there is a small margin of discretion for the actors to act. Thus, when a policy presents a high degree of agreement among the actors and the ways to achieve the objectives are known, the implementation takes place in a technical and bureaucratic way, with only the availability of resources as an obstacle.

When there is high conflict and low ambiguity, we are facing a political implementation context. In this case, the actors are clear about the objectives, but conflict and disagreement occur because the defined objectives are incompatible with the interests of the actors involved in the implementation of the policy. This context typically happens when the government decides to implement a public policy, even when the other actors do not agree with it. This type of implementation is strongly influenced by the political context and uses coercion and incentives to overcome the conflict. The result of the policy is obtained by the power of the authority that desires its execution.

When there is low conflict and high ambiguity, an experimental implementation context is characterized. The existence of a low level of conflict allows the participation and involvement of a diversity of actors interested in the implementation of the policy, and also a great deal of autonomy for the implementers. In this case, there is no questioning of the importance of the policy, but there is room not only for the participation of multiple actors in the implementation of the policy, but also for multiple interpretations and understandings of its goals, instruments, and purposes. The ample room for discretion of the implementing agents leads to variations in implementation and results that are more dependent on contextual conditions.

Finally, symbolic implementation happens when there is a high degree of ambiguity and conflict. In this case, there are many difficulties for the execution of the policy and its results end up not being effective. Generally, these are policies formulated without the necessary conditions for their implementation, with the intention of mobilizing coalitions, garnering political support, and demanding government positions, but without making resources available for their implementation. It aims to draw attention to the issue and to seek political support.

The ambiguity and conflict matrix proposed by Matland (1995) will be a reference in the analysis of these variables and in the analysis of the NEM implementation context in the state of Mato Grosso.

Implementation and incrementalism

Incrementalism argues that actors involved in the implementation of a new policy tend to rely on previous and/or ongoing experiences, thus emphasizing the importance of the past for the execution of the new policy. A new policy does not start from scratch; on the contrary, its implementation takes into account the resources and structure of other programs, as well as the expertise of the implementing agents acquired in previous experiences. In this sense, decisions made in past programs are important for the new policy.

Lindblom (1979), one of the authors who discuss the incremental analysis model, points out that decision-making processes can be classified as simple - related to rational decisions - and complex, related to incremental forms of implementation, in which the policy is executed in small steps, without generating drastic and abrupt changes in the established program. From this perspective, implementation is based on a continuous process of reviewing actions and making incremental decisions that start from the previous behavior, without necessarily involving the search for an optimal solution or the achievement of an ideal situation (PEREIRA *et al.*, 2010; SOUZA, 2006). The policy already implemented will be transformed from small marginal adjustments in its structure, thus avoiding an institutional rupture (ARANHA; FILGUEIRAS, 2016).

Lindblom (1979, p. 84-86) highlights three aspects of the incremental model of public policy implementation, namely: (i) it is built step by step, through incremental changes that start from pre-existing policies; (ii) it involves mutual adjustments and negotiation among actors; (iii) it is not a final solution to problems. It is just a step that, if successful, can be followed by others, in policies that are successively built and rebuilt, and that seek to advance toward the intended goal.

This perspective allows us to analyze the importance of previous initiatives for change in the implementation of high school reform in the state of Mato Grosso.

The implementation of the NEM in the state of Mato Grosso

The high school reform arrives in Mato Grosso in a context where actions were already underway and this influences the implementation configuration. The research by Lotta, Bauer, Rojas, and Jobim (2021) shows that Mato Grosso has been implementing, since 2008, actions in the axes Comprehensive Training and Student Protagonism; Curricular Innovations and New Teaching Formats; and Professional and Technical Education, which include curricular components that would later be contemplated by the NEM in 2017.

In the first axis, Comprehensive Training and Student Protagonism, Mato Grosso has been carrying out actions focused on the life project since 2016, totaling, by 2020, 40 experiences that are present in 8% of the schools in its network. Since 2017, it has also been implementing actions related to electivity⁵ and *mentoring*⁶, in the same number and coverage of the network as the life projects. These are, therefore, initiatives that began before or during the same period in which the high school reform was approved and in which the Ministry of Education - MEC carried out incentive and induction actions with the states, seeking to promote adherence to the NEM. In the second area, Curricular Innovations and New Teaching Formats, the state presents curricular experiences of integration of disciplines, since 2008, with 120 actions covering 24% of the network. In the third area, Professional and Technical Education, Mato Grosso presents, since 2008, 36 experiences of activities that incorporate the world of work, covering 7.5% of the network. The small scope of actions in each of the three axes strengthens the hypothesis of an incremental consolidation of the NEM in the state of Mato Grosso, as indicated in the study by Lotta, Bauer, Rojas, and Jobim (2021).

In terms of previous initiatives for change in secondary education, the state network of Mato Grosso relies on projects to expand the workload and comprehensive education in secondary education, induced more than a decade ago by the Federal Government. Since 2008, the state system has promoted initiatives of this nature, in an experimental and incremental way, in line with what would become the main axes of the NEM. Federal Government programs involving financial incentives, such as the Program for Fostering Full-Time High Schools (EMTI), called in the state as *Escolas Plenas*, have been in place since 2008, and the Innovative High School (ProEMI), since 2010, showing that the state reform agenda was guided by the Federal Government in the past period. These are programs that expand slowly and take place in a small number of schools, characterizing an experimental and incremental context of implementation (LIMDBLON, 1979; MATLAND, 1995).

The Full Schools program, that is, the schools that are part of the EMTI, is the closest to the proposal of expanding the workload and of full training presented by the reform, although its offer in the state schools would be limited, in 2020, to a small fraction of the universe of 490 schools in the state network. According to one of the interviewees:

We started with seven, then fourteen, but it didn't go beyond that. Then you think about the size of the state, in terms of Mato Grosso, four hundred and few school units, and then how is it that you are left with only a reduced

⁵ Electivity is related to the possibility of student choice (LOTTA *et al.*, 2019).

⁶ Mentoring is related to the development of orientation activities (LOTTA *et al.*, 2019).

number, with good experiences, good results, but not enlarged so that everyone had the possibility to attend, to participate in a unit that had this kind of organization (SG2, 2020).

SEE-MT's Escolas Plenas (Full Schools) project is the main state action directed toward high school. Despite its importance, it is a pilot initiative that covered, in 2020, a reduced number of 39 schools, according to information available on the SEE-MT website and in interviews.

The experience of the Escolas Plenas contributed to the pace and focus of NEM implementation in the state, which was initially implemented by a small number of schools selected according to criteria defined by the New High School Support Program, namely:

1. Participants in the Innovative High School Program - ProEMI, established by MEC's Ordinance No. 971 of October 9, 2009;
2. Full-time high school units, of state or district initiative, not participating in the Program for Fostering the Implementation of Full-Time High Schools;
3. School units that already have a five-hour daily shift (BRAZIL, 2018b, our translation).

The interviews show that the number of schools was deliberately set by SEE-MT, based on the information that the Federal Government funding for pilot schools would only be available in the initial period of implementation of the reform. The actors interviewed reported concern about the sustainability of this model in the network, without support from the Federal Government, justifying, therefore, the small number of schools participating in the pilot. This concern is fueled by the instability of the Federal Government and the MEC, by the ever-present possibility of changing the Minister of Education, and by the interruption of the MEC's actions to promote and coordinate the NEM. The interviews show that the network does not perceive the high school reform as a public policy, but rather, as a new MEC program.

Among the previous initiatives for change in the state, induced and encouraged by the Federal Government, one of the interviewees referred to the Innovative High School Program (EMI in the Portuguese acronym): "we also had the Innovative High School Program here in the state, which was actually a promoter of this change" (SG3, 2020). The same interviewee states that the arrival of the reform impacted the network significantly, but stressed that the reform also helped to show that "our state already has something in this movement" (SG3, 2020), referring to the initiative of full-time schools that takes place experimentally in the network.

In fact, at the arrival of the reform, there were around 60 school units offering the EMI Program. This offer would have contributed, according to the interviewees, to the understanding

of the changes defined by the reform, especially regarding curricular flexibility. Considering the size of the network, the number of schools offering the EMI represents a small percentage of about 12% of state schools, which means that the process of understanding and implementing the policy throughout the network is still seen as a major challenge by the SEE-MT members interviewed.

On the other hand, as few schools had experience with curricular flexibility, the SEE-MT held integration meetings between school units to exchange experiences and understand the NEM. The proposal was that the curricular flexibilization would start in 2019, but due to the MEC's inertia, it was postponed to 2020, which was considered positive by the SEE-MT actors, because "there was more time to better understand the proposal and to guide education professionals" (SG3, 2020),

By 2020, the network had started implementing the curriculum flexibility proposal in pilot schools - those selected according to the criteria of the MEC's New High School Support Program. The research identified that these are schools located around SEE-MT, and the reason given by interviewees to justify the adoption of this selection criterion concerns the lack of financial and human resources for the follow-up and monitoring of school units located in places more distant from the Secretariat. With the proximity between schools and SEE-MT as a criterion for selecting the units that will receive the policy, schools in the periphery, rural, quilombola and indigenous schools, which tend to be the most socially vulnerable, have practically no chance of being part of a possible expansion of this pilot experience.

The interviews with SEE-MT actors, conducted in 2020, revealed that the last guidance from the MEC regarding the NEM took place in 2019. They also revealed that in the face of the inertia or absence of the Federal Government, the third sector would have played a leading role in supporting the state secretariats in the process of implementing the reform.

The adherence of the state of Mato Grosso to the MEC's development programs and the lack of coordination and incentive from the Federal Government strengthened and fostered, especially from 2016 onwards, new partnerships with the third sector in an experimental context of implementation, as happened, for example, in the case of the support provided by non-state institutions to the introduction of curriculum changes and the provision of full-time schools. For example, in the curriculum dimension, the state of Mato Grosso used material on the BNCC (BRASIL, 2018a) prepared by Instituto Reúna, Instituto Porvir and Fundação Lemann. According to the interviewees, among the active Federal Government programs is the PDDE transfer and the ProBNCC - one of the most relevant programs -, although the interviewees

make reference to problems with the expected payments for the teams involved in the implementation of the new curriculum base.

Interviewees also emphasized other elements affected by the absence of the Federal Government in coordinating the high school reform. According to their speeches, SEE-MT initially used the MEC Implementation Guide and Ordinance No. 649 (BRASIL, 2018b) that institutes the New High School Support Program and establishes guidelines, parameters, and criteria for its implementation. Managers signaled, however, that the uncertainties regarding the high school reform and the guidelines of these documents have not been changed by the MEC through new actions. For the interviewees, the uncertainties about the NEM would have been reinforced by the characteristic disorganization of the few training meetings promoted by the MEC, which were considered "extremely disjointed".

In parallel to identifying the absence of the MEC, the managers interviewed recognize the role played by the National Council of Secretaries of Education - CONSED in the implementation of the reform, especially in enabling and organizing training and exchange spaces, which allowed SEE-MT to begin the process of producing the curriculum reference document for high school.

So CONSED is playing an intense role in this implementation process. So, it is the one that has provided training for the general coordination, and it is the one that has provided training for the stage coordinators. It has given us orientations that have allowed us to walk with a little more criteria, and also with more tranquility. It is CONSED that has, in fact, facilitated our work. The Implementation Guide [of the MEC], of course, also guides us, but it is only the beginning... I think it is the initial step. What has developed our work a lot, what has provided us with precise orientations, a little more precise, is CONSED (SG3, 2020).

CONSED's participation in the implementation of the reform is through the Curriculum and New High School Front. This front is one of the working strategies of the Learning Agenda, which was developed in collaboration with the Union of Municipal Education Officers (UNDIME) and brings together priority issues for states and municipalities. Through this Front, CONSED supports Brazilian states in the elaboration of curricula and in the construction of the architecture of the NEM.

The curricular dimension of the reform is perhaps the one that has advanced the most in the state in recent times. This is due, according to the interviewees, to the experience accumulated by the SEE-MT team and its collaborators with the process of reformulation and adaptation of the Elementary School curriculum to the BNCC (BRASIL, 2018a). The interviews report that the same state coordination and the same writers and collaborators who

formed the team responsible for drafting the new Elementary School curriculum remained linked to SEE-MT, collaborating with the construction of the new curriculum reference document for NEM. According to the interviews, the state does not have the support of the Federal Government in the reformulation of the curriculum and the implementation of the reform, but a management analyst hired by CONSED to work with the SEE-MT in the construction of the public consultation process of the new curriculum, which involves the proposal of general education and also the training itineraries.

Still in relation to the curricular dimension, the interviewees recognize that the technical-vocational itinerary was the least defined in 2020, when the interviews were conducted, and point to the lack of structure in the network schools to adopt it, indicating the search for partnerships of the Secretariat with the State University of Mato Grosso - UNEMAT, and with the S System, to offer the fifth itinerary. They recognize, however, that this approach is hampered by a lack of financial resources and infrastructure, making it feasible only in some of the schools that already offer high school integrated with professional training.

In the case of the new Elementary School curriculum guided by the BNCC (BRAZIL, 2018a), the Mato Grosso State Education Council promoted discussion events, inviting teachers from different areas. These actions would have contributed, according to the interviewees, to the maturation of the subsequent debate with high school teachers. In addition, the fact that it was the same team that participated in the discussion of the new curriculum for both elementary and high school would have facilitated the understanding of the progression of competencies and skills throughout elementary education.

In addition, the discussion of the NEM curriculum with the network's full-time schools would have collaborated, more specifically, with the understanding of the "structure of the itineraries," "the elective block," "the life project," and "the tracks of deepening. The interviewees said they hoped that the experience with the full-time schools would help them "explain the function of the itinerary," and then "mature the general discussion with the teachers of the network," thus reducing, in Matland's (1995) terms, the degree of ambiguity and conflict around the reform.

The process of continuing education is another challenge for SEE-MT that is dependent on support from the Federal Government. A training plan was developed focusing on the professionals who work in the pilot schools and whose continuity depends on the transfer provided by the Federal Government to support the implementation of NEM in the states, in the amount of one million eight hundred thousand reais, planned for the year 2020. In the *Escolas Plenas*, initial teacher training activities have already been implemented focusing on

the comprehensive education of students. It was precisely during this training that, according to the interviewees, the state centers for teacher training had contact with the new methodologies required for comprehensive training.

The interviewees' forecast is that the training activities will be resumed in an expanded way soon after the approval of the state document of curricular reference for High School. The training plan for the trainers is under the responsibility of the 15 Professional Training and Update Centers (CEFAPROS) distributed throughout the state, with training initiatives planned for principals, coordinators and teachers in the state network.

The expansion of the workload is also identified as a major challenge in the implementation of the NEM. Currently, the state does not have a plan that contemplates this expansion, but rather a model implemented by the Secretariat on an experimental basis. The forecast was that in 2021 the proposal for curricular flexibility would begin in pilot schools, but the interviewees stated that there are no prospects for expanding the number of schools beyond those already selected.

Another concern present in the interviews refers to the discredit regarding the effectiveness of the BNCC itself (BRAZIL, 2018a):

Unless the Base is no longer a public policy and then you have the deconstruction of an entire process, then this document will have no validity whatsoever, in short, there will be no moment to charge for the implementation of this new architecture (SG1, 2020).

The speech refers to the curriculum reference document for high school that is under construction in the state and highlights the scenario of uncertainty created by the Federal Government. In relation to the training itineraries, the SEE-MT is waiting for the diagnosis of the network's capacities and definitions from the State Education Council to decide which of these itineraries will be incorporated into the state curriculum. The network, however, proposes two differentiated itineraries, namely: a) an itinerary with an in-depth track within an area of knowledge, plus an integrated itinerary; and b) an itinerary with several areas of knowledge making up an in-depth track. The integrated itinerary is the one that has more strength in the network, because it "guarantees diversity of knowledge for the students".

The discredit around the educational policy is not restricted only to the implementation of the BNCC (BRAZIL, 2018a), covering also the implementation of the NEM itself. At first, the arrival of the reform was seen by SEE-MT's implementing agents as a necessary action due to the challenges faced by the network. However, the interviews also showed that there was a climate of disbelief regarding the effective implementation of NEM, both among the top state

educational bureaucracies and in the school community, which generated conflicts and low expectations around its implementation.

The discredit can be explained by the inaction and lack of continuity in the coordination of the NEM and the BNCC (BRAZIL, 2018a) by the MEC, but also by the fact that the high school reform has been moving for some time in a scenario that is also heir of the conflicts raised by the launch of this policy. Let us remember that, in 2016, the reform was enacted in a context of political instability, by Provisional Measure, generating a climate of conflict that was not dissolved despite the approval of Law No. 13.415/2017 (BRAZIL, 2017), the following year, which makes the legitimization of the NEM by the states still an open issue.

Because of this, it is not difficult to understand that the initial reaction of SEE-MT and teachers was to believe that the reform would still undergo modifications, and even that it would not be implemented. According to one of the interviewees, "only in early 2020 did the Secretariat really start to believe that the policy would be implemented" (SG3, 2020). This feeling of uncertainty, however, is still present, especially in relation to the new curriculum, the training itineraries, and the expansion of full-time schools.

The interviews also made reference to the high degree of conflict among teachers and the union in relation to the high school reform. This conflict is justified by a lack of understanding of the policy and is being reduced by the actions started by SEE-MT in 2020 in order to mobilize the network to implement the reform. In any case, the interviews show that, among the challenges posed to high school by the arrival of the new policy, the biggest is perhaps teacher training, since the network has a "disciplinary-trained" teacher who is faced with a reform that requires an "interdisciplinary teaching profile.

The SEE-MT agents interviewed evaluate, however, that the arrival of the reform is promoting a new look at High School in the state and a reflection about the transition between the final years of Elementary School and this final stage of Basic Education. They claim that the concern with the transition of students between stages of Basic Education is one of the defensible points of the reform. In line with this perception, according to one of the interviewees, "within the Secretariat itself, there was a mobilization movement in which people were able to better understand the proposal, to understand the conceptions behind it, and this has been positive" (SG3, 2020).

Final remarks

The analysis of the initial implementation of the high school reform in the state of Mato Grosso suggests that a series of previous actions were largely driven and encouraged by the Federal Government, especially until 2017. Thus, the early implementation in the state of some of the elements that would be present in the future federal reform for high school is related to prior actions that involved technical and financial support from the MEC. These actions directed the State's agenda towards its incremental expansion (LINDBLÖM, 1979), as is the case, for example, with the EMTI/*Escolas Plenas* Program and the pilot schools receiving the Innovative High School (ProEMI).

However, since 2017, the Federal Government has discontinued the incentives and the coordination of the implementation of the NEM, favoring with this, the emergence of a series of uncertainties regarding the objectives and the means proposed for the reform, factors that lead to the conformation of a context of experimental type implementation in the state (MATLAND, 1995).

Together, the analyses carried out in this study help to understand the incremental and experimental nature of high school reform in the state of Mato Grosso, and how the state's dependence on the Federal Government's technical and financial support ends up putting the pace of reform in line with the MEC's initiatives (LOTTA; BAUER; ROJAS; JOBIM, 2021).

Finally, the study contributes to the understanding of the governance structure of the NEM implementation and the role of CONSED, particularly in the development of the new state curriculum for high school.

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