

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATIONAL POLICIES IN LINE WITH AND IN
INTERFACE WITH THE EVOLUTION OF BRAZILIAN POLITICS: BRIEF
REFLECTIONS**

***O DESENVOLVIMENTO DAS POLÍTICAS EDUCACIONAIS NO COMPASSO E
INTERFACE COM A EVOLUÇÃO DA POLÍTICA BRASILEIRA: BREVES
REFLEXÕES***

***EL DESARROLLO DE POLÍTICAS EDUCATIVAS EN SINTONÍA Y EN INTERFAZ
CON LA EVOLUCIÓN DE LA POLÍTICA BRASILEÑA: BREVES REFLEXIONES***



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ABSTRACT: This article presents an overview of the development of educational policy in relation to and at the intersection with the evolution of Brazilian politics, traversing the structural milestones of the education system established over the last five decades. It reflects on the historical and political context of the governments from that period to the present day, in which public education policies became an agenda item, were developed, implemented, evaluated, and continued. It aims to reflect on the pressing need for educational public policies that are guided by their own historical trajectory, enabling analyses of educational outcomes over time to inform decision-making and proposals for actions that will mitigate or resolve, in the coming years, the significant gaps in Brazilian education.

KEYWORDS: Public policies. Structural frameworks. Historical context. Basic education.

RESUMO: *O presente artigo apresenta um panorama do desenvolvimento da política educacional no compasso e interface com a evolução da política brasileira, perpassando pelos marcos estruturais do sistema de ensino, constituídos ao longo das últimas cinco décadas. Apresenta reflexões acerca do contexto histórico político dos governos desse período até os dias atuais, em que as políticas públicas em educação se tornaram agenda, foram elaboradas, implementadas, avaliadas e tiveram continuidade. Visa refletir sobre a necessidade premente de políticas públicas educacionais que se orientem a partir de sua própria trajetória histórica, possibilitando análises dos resultados educacionais ao longo do tempo para tomadas de decisão e propostas de ações que venham mitigar ou sanar; nos próximos anos, as grandes lacunas de escolarização da educação brasileira.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Políticas públicas. Marcos estruturais. Contexto histórico. Educação básica.*

RESUMEN: *Este artículo presenta un panorama del desarrollo de la política educativa en relación con la evolución de la política brasileña, recorriendo los hitos estructurales del sistema educativo establecidos en las últimas cinco décadas. Reflexiona sobre el contexto histórico y político de los gobiernos desde ese período hasta la actualidad, en los que las políticas públicas de educación se convirtieron en un tema de agenda, se desarrollaron, implementaron, evaluaron y continuaron. Su objetivo es reflexionar sobre la apremiante necesidad de políticas públicas educativas que se guíen por su propia trayectoria histórica, permitiendo el análisis de los resultados educativos a lo largo del tiempo para fundamentar la toma de decisiones y proponer acciones que mitiguen o resuelvan, en los próximos años, las importantes brechas en la educación brasileña.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Políticas públicas. Marcos estructurales. Contexto histórico. Educación básica.*

INTRODUCTION

Understanding the development of education policy in tandem and in interaction with the evolution of Brazilian politics is a relevant and necessary task for grasping how public policies in education are structured and the extent to which they impact society by addressing demands for economic and social development, as well as cultural and ethical needs and the challenges posed by new technologies—particularly within the current context shaped by post-pandemic dynamics.

As society mobilizes and demands the guarantee of access to and permanence in an education that is of quality, equitable, and aligned with its aspirations and needs, it effectively compels the government to absorb these demands and translate them into public policies. However, the instruments of public policy, conceived through actions driven by class interests in favor of more qualified education, are constructed—according to Perdonatti and Lemes (2022)—amid negotiations of political interests, conflicts of beliefs, and differing representations among stakeholders. This often results in significant difficulty or a high degree of complexity in their implementation, and they do not always achieve their intended objectives.

The notion of education policies involving systems characterized by universality and compulsory provision—offering specific levels of education to all, with the State ensuring funding to guarantee such universality—is historically recent (Neubauer, 2018).

In this regard, Durham (2010), in analyzing educational policies, notes that the successes or failures of their implementation are not always the direct responsibility of the federal government.

According to the 1988 Federal Constitution, “the political-administrative organization of the Federative Republic of Brazil comprises the Union, the States, the Federal District, and the Municipalities, all autonomous under the terms of this Constitution” (Brazil, 1988, art. 18). Therefore, the effectiveness of educational development depends on the performance of these federative entities, taking into account differences inherent to regional and local specificities, such as the availability or scarcity of resources and the degree of existing social inequalities. Undoubtedly, these differences lead to varied outcomes, regardless of the national policies implemented.

In the context of the formulation, implementation, and execution of education policies in Brazil—focusing, in this discussion, on the last fifty years—it is essential to recognize that certain trends occur independently of changes in government policies. These trends are present across administrations and arise naturally from social pressures and demands, as well as from

the interests and beliefs of the actors involved, permeating the entire public policy cycle—from agenda-setting to formulation, implementation, and evaluation.

With regard to public policies in education, they should—and are expected to—be proposed and developed over the long term, ensuring their continuity and consolidation. This is because educational policies have a cumulative character, as their outcomes and impacts are rarely immediate and are often observed in subsequent administrations. For this reason, according to Delors (2001, p. 175), “in education, one must move beyond short-sighted policies or cascading reforms that are questioned with each change of government.”

Education is a public good. This idea is intrinsically linked to access, which must be guaranteed as a right for every citizen. Consequently, the State has a fundamental role in proposing and sustaining public educational policies that ensure this subjective right.

PUBLIC POLICIES IN EDUCATION: STRUCTURAL MILESTONES OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

In Brazil, the structural milestones of the educational system have been shaped through a historical process involving legislation, guidelines, and regulatory instruments that have organized and consolidated both basic and higher education. Analyzing these milestones in tandem with and in relation to the evolution of Brazilian politics constitutes the objective of this article, as it enables an understanding of the normative foundations underpinning the organization of the country’s educational system.

Over the past fifty years, particularly since the 1970s, significant transformations can be identified, marked by different types of Brazilian educational policies. These policies have exerted strong influence on educational practices and have had lasting consequences, especially on policy proposals in subsequent decades. Thus, the current educational context reflects cumulative effects formed by an articulated set of measures proposed by the State, driven by the social and political contexts in which they were placed on the agenda, formulated, and implemented.

Consequently, subsequent generations of policies were influenced by their predecessors. According to Franco et al. (2007), it is possible to identify significant differences between the first two generations of public policies (1971–1982 and 1982–1995) and the subsequent two (1995–2001 and 2002–2010), as well as to observe policy proposals formulated from 2010 to the present context of 2026. The authors note that while the 1980s were marked by discontinuity

in educational policies, from 1995 onward these policies acquired greater continuity, which is regarded as a positive development.

Thus, the initial milestone of the first generation of policies can be identified as the Law of Guidelines and Bases (LDB) for primary and secondary education—Law No. 5,692/71 (Brazil, 1971)—enacted on August 11, 1971, during the military regime. This law introduced significant changes to Brazilian education by making primary education (grades 1 to 8, ages 7 to 14) compulsory (Chapter II, art. 20) and by structuring secondary education with a strong emphasis on vocational training—an aspect that today finds parallels in the curricular proposals of the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC) for the new secondary education model (Brazil, 2018). At the primary level, the mass entry of students permanently transformed the profile of Brazilian schools. Under the same legal framework, the National Fund for the Development of Education (FNDE) was created, financed through earmarked resources from the Education Salary, enabling federal intervention in primary education.

The LDB (Brazil, 1971) aimed to respond to the demand for the universalization of education from the first to the eighth grade. However, the reality of educational systems at the time revealed limitations that did not align with the objectives established by the legislation. In response to the massive influx of students into primary education and the continuation into lower secondary levels, combined with a context marked by structural and teaching deficiencies that resulted in high rates of grade repetition and school dropout, measures were proposed that came to define the first generation of public policies in education, as noted by Franco et al. (2007).

Guided by a technical rationality that shaped much of the educational policy of that period, the role of pedagogues emerged, who began to occupy positions in school administration, supervision, and educational guidance. Additionally, in an effort to mitigate learning gaps and high failure rates, the implementation of parallel remedial practices within schools was proposed.

From the early 1980s onward, with the advance of the country's redemocratization process, education was driven by social demands linked to the expansion of rights and popular participation. The weakening of the dictatorial regime and increased social mobilization contributed to redefining the public agenda and influencing educational policies. In this context, debates intensified around the universalization of access, democratic management of education, and the role of the State in guaranteeing the right to education, culminating in the consolidation of these principles in the 1988 Federal Constitution (Durham, 2007).

The Constitution introduced significant changes to the educational landscape with the aim of promoting a free, just, and solidary society, as stated in its text (Brazil, 1988). It also established impactful measures within the educational system, notably the constitutional recognition of university autonomy; the increase in the mandatory allocation of minimum percentages of public budgets to education—18% for the federal government and 25% for states and municipalities; and the reconfiguration of the federal pact, granting municipalities autonomy to organize their own education systems.

The expansion of educational provision to the Brazilian population revealed the need for a new Law of Guidelines and Bases (LDB), designed to meet the new model of society established by the Federal Constitution. Its enactment occurred eight years later (1988–1996), as a result of intense political debate and active participation by civil society, reaffirming education as a right of all and a duty of the State. On December 20, 1996, the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDBN), Law No. 9,394/1996 (Brazil, 1996a), was promulgated.

Among these measures, it is important to highlight university autonomy, which was advocated by the public sector but produced an unforeseen and favorable impact on the private sector. This impact consisted of the removal of control by the Federal Council of Education over private universities, clearly benefiting them and leading to a sharp expansion of academic programs driven by a distinctly commercial orientation. Another noteworthy measure was the autonomy granted to municipalities to organize their own education systems, which were established and began to be managed independently from state or federal authorities. However, this also created challenges in the formulation and implementation of national or state-level policies for basic education.

This renewed context fostered transformations in the organization of education systems and in society at large. Notable developments included the democratization of schools, which gave rise to campaigns for the election of school principals; increased autonomy for teachers and school units within a more egalitarian and plural vision of education, in which teachers came to be seen as democratic agents responsible for devising solutions to pedagogical challenges; the reorganization of early grades and the establishment of the Basic Literacy Cycle (CBA), adopted by several education systems to address failure rates and eliminate grade repetition within this stage; greater attention to early childhood education, which, since the 1980s, became a landmark in the reorientation of policies for daycare centers and preschools, expanding provision at the municipal level; and, finally, the process of municipalization—

already anticipated by Law No. 5,692/71 (Brazil, 1971)—which guided schools offering only the initial years of primary education to progressively expand to the full cycle. Although this policy generated considerable controversy and resistance, particularly regarding its impact on the teaching profession, progress was made as many municipalities assumed responsibility for state primary schools.

EDUCATIONAL POLICIES FROM 1995 TO 2002

This historical period was characterized by significant transformations, with highly relevant impacts on Brazilian society. It was marked by the prominence of an oppositional political stance embodied in the election of Fernando Henrique Cardoso (FHC) to the presidency of Brazil in 1994.

The influence of educational social liberalism during the FHC administrations (1995–2002) was defined by an attempt to reconcile market logic with state action aimed at ensuring universal access to basic education, particularly at the primary level. This period was marked by a substantial restructuring of educational legislation, which, in turn, contributed to the expansion of the private sector—especially in higher education—the deterioration of public education, notably technical institutes, the establishment of systemic evaluation mechanisms, and the prioritization of funding for basic education.

The FHC administration (1995–1997 and 1998–2002) was characterized by continuity in educational policies throughout this period. It was a government with active involvement in the Ministry of Education (MEC), led at the time by Minister Paulo Renato de Souza. This engagement accelerated the process of drafting and approving the 1996 LDB and the constitutional reform that created conditions for a new institutional organization focused on funding primary education, along with complementary regulatory legislation. The LDB came to be regarded as one of the structural milestones of the Brazilian education system, introducing important innovations and advancements, although some of the proposed transformations have yet to be fully realized.

Within the legal framework of LDB implementation, and in parallel with the educational challenges faced by the country in the 1990s, education policy during this period stood out for the expansion of primary education (grades 1 to 8) and private higher education. These measures aimed to meet the demand for universalizing compulsory education and expanding access to higher education. To this end, the Fund for the Development and Maintenance of

Primary Education (FUNDEF) (Brazil, 1996b) was created as an accounting-based fund, alongside incentives for the expansion of private higher education programs.

According to Abreu (2010), these measures contributed to the universalization of primary education and increased access to higher education; however, they did not alter the low quality of basic education and, conversely, contributed to the emergence of a precarious and low-quality higher education system.

The proposed constitutional amendment on education financing was submitted to the National Congress in October 1995, and Constitutional Amendment No. 14 was approved in September 1996 (Brazil, 1996b). The complementary legislation implementing FUNDEF, Law No. 9,424/96 (Brazil, 1996c), was enacted in December 1996 and implemented nationwide on January 1, 1998. The innovation introduced by FUNDEF lay in restructuring the financing of primary education (grades 1 to 8), earmarking a portion of constitutionally allocated education resources specifically for this stage. Constitutional Amendment No. 14/1996 (Brazil, 1996b) established that 60% of these resources would be reserved for primary education, representing 15% of the total revenue of states and municipalities. The amendment also introduced new criteria for the distribution and use of 15% of key state and municipal taxes, allocating these resources between state governments and their municipalities based on student enrollment figures in each education system. This mechanism encouraged municipalization and expanded municipal participation.

In 1995, the Ministry of Education proposed a draft for discussion of the National Curriculum Parameters (PCN), and in 1997, the National Council of Education (CNE) approved the PCNs for early childhood education, primary education, and secondary education (Brazil, 1997).

Despite the implementation of these policies, shortcomings in pedagogical practices in early childhood education were observed, leading to learning gaps in primary education. These gaps, in turn, created difficulties in students' progression to secondary education and, consequently, to higher education, resulting in unfilled vacancies at this level. In addition, significant regional inequalities were evident, with the North and Northeast regions showing lower learning outcomes compared to the South and Southeast.

In this context, the LDB played a decisive role by requiring periodic assessments at all levels of the education system under the responsibility of the federal government, in collaboration with states and municipalities. It was with the creation of the Basic Education Assessment System (Saeb) and the National Examination of Higher Education Courses

(Provão) that the issue of quality began to be systematically addressed, raising public awareness of the complex educational challenges within the Brazilian system. According to Lemes (2021), in line with international trends in studies on effectiveness and quality, evaluation assumed a central role, accompanied by the development of numerous assessment instruments.

By the late 1990s, also in accordance with constitutional principles, Brazil adhered to the tenets of liberalism and, consequently, to performance-based principles established internationally through accountability. The transition from the dictatorial period to redemocratization appears to have led the country and its political leadership to adopt certain ideological orientations that redefined the Brazilian state as a liberal state. However, this shift was not sufficient to reorient the methods and techniques of research and analysis regarding how this “new” state—now often described as post-bureaucratic—would relate to society in general and to education in particular. (Lemes, 2021, p. 3)

According to Abreu (2010), the FHC period, in terms of its outcomes, was notable for expanding policies aimed at universalizing access to primary education. The demands of basic education outlined in the National Education Plan 2001–2010 (PNE), established by Law No. 10,172 of January 9, 2001 (Brazil, 2001), focused on increasing attention to early childhood education and secondary education, and, in higher education, on expanding the public network and improving the quality of private institutions, with particular attention to regional disparities.

The LDB No. 9,394/96 (Brazil, 1996a) had already *предусмотрел* the development of a national education plan. The objectives established for the 2001 PNE, conceived as a state policy, included raising the population’s level of schooling; improving the quality of education at all levels; reducing social and regional inequalities in access to and successful completion of public education; and democratizing the management of public education, in accordance with principles that ensure the participation of education professionals in the development of school pedagogical projects, as well as the involvement of school and local communities in school councils or equivalent bodies (Brazil, 2001).

Thus, important legal innovations were consolidated, shaping the configuration of educational policies during this period. According to Franco et al. (2007), these included the enhancement of Saeb assessments; the financing of education through FUNDEF, extended to schools participating in the Direct Funding to Schools Program; the advancement of municipalization; the encouragement of nine-year primary education, which would later be implemented; the inclusion of early childhood education for children aged four to six as the

first stage of basic education; the implementation of the Bolsa-Escola program in 2001, benefiting more than five million families at the time and later incorporated into Bolsa-Família under the Lula administration; initial and continuing teacher education, establishing that basic education teachers should hold at least a licentiate degree, with part of the 60% of FUNDEF-linked resources allocated to teacher training; and measures to correct school flow, supported by the Ministry of Education, aimed at addressing large-scale grade repetition, which had become an ineffective and exclusionary practice.

EDUCATIONAL POLICIES FROM 2003 TO 2011

From 2003 onward, Brazil entered the second generation of educational policies, marked by the first two terms of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (Lula).

The beginning of the first term was characterized by instability, with successive changes involving three Ministers of Education. In the second term, the appointment of Fernando Haddad as Minister of Education was confirmed months after Lula's reelection. It was during this second term that more effective government policies were proposed. These policies deepened the instruments and methods of educational evaluation, particularly through the Basic Education Development Index (Ideb), Prova Brasil, and FUNDEF, which was replaced by the Fund for the Maintenance and Development of Basic Education and the Valorization of Education Professionals (FUNDEB) (Brazil, 2007a), as well as the Education Development Plan (PDE), considered a government policy aimed at achieving the objectives and targets of the 2001–2010 PNE.

To better understand the policies introduced in this second generation, it is important to recognize that the structural milestones of the education system—the LDB (Brazil, 1996a) and the 2001–2010 PNE (Brazil, 2001), originating from the first generation—provided the legislative foundation for the agenda-setting, formulation, and implementation of a range of subsequent policies and programs.

Regarding education financing policies under the Lula administration, expectations centered on FUNDEF due to the temporary nature of its legislation and the criticism from the Workers' Party, which considered it excessively focused on primary education, to the detriment of other educational sectors.

Provisional Measure No. 339/2006 (Brazil, 2006a), which established FUNDEB, was drafted between Lula's reelection and the beginning of his second term and introduced several

modifications compared to the version previously submitted to Congress. Among the key changes were the inclusion of early childhood education; the establishment of a national minimum salary for teachers, to be defined by specific legislation; and the prioritization of primary education through a provision ensuring that resources for other educational levels would only be distributed after guaranteeing that per-student funding for primary education reached at least the final real value established under FUNDEF.

FUNDEB was formally created by Constitutional Amendment No. 53/2006 (Brazil, 2006b) and regulated by Law No. 11,494/2007 (Brazil, 2007a) and Decree No. 6,253/2007 (Brazil, 2007b), replacing FUNDEF, which had been in effect from 1998 to 2006. It was later established as a permanent mechanism for financing public education through Constitutional Amendment No. 108 of August 27, 2020 (Brazil, 2020a), and is currently regulated by Law No. 14,113 of December 25, 2020 (Brazil, 2020b). Under this framework, the federal government's contribution to the new FUNDEB has been gradually increased, reaching 23% of the Fund's total resources by 2026. This contribution was 19% in 2024, 21% in 2025, and is projected to reach 23% in 2026.

Undeniably, FUNDEB represents an advance over FUNDEF in terms of the number of students it covers; however, it does not represent an overall increase in financial resources for public basic education.

With the aim of further improving basic education, the Education Development Plan (PDE) was launched and established by Decree No. 6,094 of 2007 (Brazil, 2007c), under the title *Commitment All for Education*. It defines a set of guidelines for educational development associated with evaluation methodologies designed to monitor progress toward achieving established targets.

A distinctive feature of the PDE sets it apart from other legal instruments, as it reflects an intention to develop and implement a set of mechanisms that, collectively, address the problem of low quality in basic education. The instruments proposed by its guidelines include the Basic Education Development Index (Ideb), the Voluntary Term of Adherence to the *Commitment All for Education*, the creation of mechanisms for technical and financial assistance from the federal government to public schools, and the establishment of the Articulated Action Plan, aimed at supporting areas such as educational management, teacher training, the preparation of school support staff, pedagogical resources, and school infrastructure (Brazil, 2007c).

Although the PDE encompasses a broad set of programs, it has received substantial criticism, particularly due to the insufficiency of actions resulting from limited resources and the economic policies adopted by the federal government, as well as the lack of societal participation in the formulation of its proposed actions.

In 2009, the National Congress enacted Constitutional Amendment No. 59 on December 11 (Brazil, 2009). This amendment mandated the gradual elimination of the mechanism that allowed the federal government to decouple revenues allocated to education, a process that began in 2011. It also established compulsory education across all stages of basic education—covering ages 4 to 17—which came fully into effect in 2016. Additionally, the amendment introduced a provision requiring that the National Education Plan (PNE) include targets linked to a predefined proportion of the Gross Domestic Product.

With regard to Decree No. 6,094 (Brazil, 2007c), it is also important to note the establishment of the *Commitment All for Education* Goals Plan, which defined guidelines and responsibilities to be fulfilled by the federative entities. Among its targets, particular emphasis was placed on ensuring children's literacy in the early years of primary education, thereby guaranteeing their right to learning. In this sense, the decree established, among its guidelines, that all children should be literate by no later than eight years of age, recognizing literacy as a fundamental condition for continued schooling. This guideline was later reaffirmed and expanded in the 2014–2024 National Education Plan (Brazil, 2014), especially in Goal 5, which establishes that all children should be literate by the end of the third year of primary education.

Although this target stipulates that all children should be fully literate by the age of eight, the percentage achieved by 2023 indicates that this goal has not yet been met, highlighting the need for intensified efforts through educational policies aimed at reducing the gap between achieved and expected outcomes.

EDUCATIONAL POLICIES FROM 2012 TO THE PRESENT

From 2012 onward, Brazil appears to have entered a third generation of educational policies, spanning the Dilma/Temer administrations, followed by the Bolsonaro government, and continuing under the current Lula administration. These periods have not introduced major innovations; however, amid ideological disputes, popular pressures, class interests, budgetary constraints, instances of corruption, and successive changes in leadership within the Ministry

of Education, policies of significant educational and social impact have been maintained by legal obligation.

With regard to the current Lula administration, a more thorough analysis is still premature due to its recent nature. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that, in 2023 and 2024, revisions to the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC) for the new secondary education model were undertaken in response to strong public and academic pressure. These revisions led to successive adjustments to the proposal, culminating in the enactment of a new law in July 2024 and its implementation beginning in 2025.

It is important to clarify that this third generation of policies had already been envisaged in the 1988 Federal Constitution and in LDB No. 9,394/96, particularly regarding the necessary continuity of the National Education Plans for the decades 2014–2024 and 2024–2034, as well as the need to address the failure to achieve most of the targets set for the 2001–2010 period. It also encompasses the development and approval of the BNCC on December 22, 2017 (Brazil, 2017).

Considered a foundational instrument of Brazilian public educational policy, the 2014–2024 National Education Plan (Law No. 13,005/2014) reached the end of its term in June 2024 without achieving the majority of its 20 targets. Possible explanations include budgetary constraints and the impacts of the pandemic, particularly during its final three years.

On December 22, 2017, Resolution CNE/CP No. 2 was published, establishing and guiding the implementation of the BNCC (Brazil, 2017). The BNCC is mandatory across all stages and modalities of Basic Education and presents an organized and progressive set of essential learning outcomes to which all students are entitled.

The BNCC has been developed based on the LDB through a series of educational regulations and normative frameworks aimed at ensuring the acquisition of core knowledge by all students throughout Brazil. Its development, however, has also been shaped by a long historical process marked by conflicts of beliefs—both social and political—and by debates surrounding the concept of a minimum curriculum, which gradually gained strength until its eventual consolidation.

As highlighted by Lemes (2021, p. 2,194), the BNCC guides the construction of a curriculum grounded in “necessarily inclusive schooling,” emphasizing “the need to recognize and embrace culturality, territoriality, and diversity.” Curriculum development must therefore respect territorial and cultural specificities, particularly within the context of the federal arrangement that grants municipalities autonomy in organizing their education systems.

In the years since its implementation, it has become evident that a curricular document such as the BNCC alone cannot address all the complexities and challenges of schooling. It is essential to invest in the training of school leaders and teachers, equipping them for its effective implementation, with the goal of improving student learning outcomes. Furthermore, there is an urgent need for public educational policies to be guided by their own historical trajectories, enabling the analysis of their impacts over time and supporting more informed decision-making and the formulation of effective actions capable of mitigating—or overcoming—the profound disparities that characterize Brazilian education.

CONCLUSION

According to Delors, regarding the regulatory role of educational policies,

it is the responsibility of policymakers, who must define the future through a long-term vision, to ensure both the stability of the educational system and its capacity for reform, to guarantee overall coherence by establishing priorities, and, finally, to foster a genuine societal debate on economic and financial choices. (Delors, 2001, p. 169)

In this sense, it is both crucial and necessary for political representatives and Brazilian society as a whole to turn their attention to the issues that have persisted throughout the historical trajectory of education in the country, in order to understand the development of these policies in tandem and in interaction with the evolution of Brazilian politics.

This reflective analysis constitutes a relevant and necessary effort to understand how public policies in education have been structured and the extent to which they have impacted society by addressing educational demands, with a view toward economic, social, cultural, and ethical development, as well as technological challenges up to the present day. Such an understanding is essential to support the formulation of public educational policies capable of mitigating—or even overcoming, in the coming years—the significant gaps in schooling that characterize Brazilian education.

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