

Brazil

FERNANDO HADDAD, *Minister of Education*: In the year 2000 we were in a particularly dramatic situation in Brazil. It was the first year of the PISA program, and Brazil did very badly. Because not only had the quality of education fallen dramatically during the previous decade, there was a problem of students dropping out and failing. 2000 was a landmark in Brazilian history because it was the year when we desperately needed to change the situation.

TITLE: "Strong Performers and Successful Reformers in Education: Brazil"

CELIO DA CUNHA, *Professor Brasilia University*: It is important to visualize the following, historically education in Brazil had always been the privilege of the elite. Only very recently did Brazil start its revolution of universal access to education.

FERNANDO HADDAD: In short what happened to Brazilian education in the 1990's, was that we tried to combine two measures that were incompatible. In 1988 we passed the present Brazilian constitution, which made education a personal right for every child and young person, and created universal access to basic education. But shortly afterwards, instead of increasing, resources for education diminished, in the sense that there were more people participating in education and the resources available did not keep up with the increase.

MALVINA TANIA TUTTMAN, *President, Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anisio Teixeira*: Up until the middle of the 1960's, we could have considered it a high quality education system. But once we started having universal access, even though we had an increase of 90% in the number of children in the system, the quality standards could not be maintained.

STUDENTS: *Reciting a lesson out loud together.*

TEACHER: *What did you understand from this text?*

FERNANDO HADDAD: To change the situation we were in, it was necessary to invest more in basic education. So we doubled the investment per student.

TEXT SLIDE: In 1998, Brazil spent the equivalent of \$956 per student in primary school and \$1,069 per student in lower secondary school, calculated on a basis of Purchasing Power Parities. By 2007, spending had nearly doubled, reaching \$18,62 per student in primary school and \$1,947 per student in lower secondary school.

FERNANDO HADDAD: Today in Brazil more than 5% of the GDP is invested in public education, while before less than 4% was invested. We set a goal in the national education plan that by 2020, the average salary for a teacher will have to be equivalent to the average salary of other professionals with university level degrees in the country. Also, we created a mechanism to reward the schools that achieve

their goals, so that schools that meet their objectives automatically receive bonus funding from the federal government. So the schools could assume greater autonomy. On the other hand, the schools that don't accomplish their goals, are not penalized by under-funding, because we would run the risk of punishing the child twice.

MARIA IZOLDA CELA DE ARRUDA COELHO, *Education Secretary, State of Ceara*: The best schools get a prize because they achieve their goals. It's an amount based on the number of students, and it's a significant sum, resources they have never seen before. The 150 schools that had the lowest results, they also get a bonus per student that is lower than the prize, but is still a meaningful value, and they receive that as support to implement improvements.

DOMINGOS SAVIO FERREIRA SOUSA, *Principal, Jose Da Matta E Silva Sobral*: This check is given to the 150 best schools. When they come to the school the principal meets with the school council to determine where these resources will be spent. From that we make improvements in the school. We just built four more classrooms, we bought a lot of material, paper, stationery, Xerox machines. We also give bonuses to the teachers and the other workers at the school.

STUDENT: *Action! I need to leave.*

STUDENT 2: *Please stay.*

STUDENT: *Oh, the dawn of day...*

STUDENT 2: *Not yet.*

STUDENT: *Oh my love, my love.*

STUDENT 2: *Not yet.*

STUDENT: *The morning light!*

STUDENT 2: *A meteor!*

STUDENT: *To stay and die...*

STUDENT 2: *To leave?*

STUDENT: *Goodbye.*

MARIA IZOLDA CELA DE ARRUDA COELHO: We also establish a relationship between the schools with the best results and those with the lowest results. Each school with a good result commits to establish some kind of tutorship to a school

with a low result, sharing their experience, and helping them to improve their low results.

CELIO DA CUNHA: Brazil created the Basic Education Development Index, the IDEB. The IDEB includes data that is collected by the Ministry of Education about the performance of each school. This evaluation done by the Ministry of Education is then sent back to each school, and from this data we are able to establish goals.

TEXT SLIDE: Monitoring performance as a means to improve outcomes: In 1995, Brazil launched a national assessment that tested a sample of students in 4th, 8th, and 11th grade, every two years. In 2005, this assessment was extended to every 4th and 8th grader.

TEXT SLIDE: In 2007 Brazil launched the Basic Education Development Index (IDEB) which links assessment scores with indicators of student flow.

FERNANDO HADDAD: We started to publish the results by school. There are more than 60,000 public schools evaluated every two years. There was no precedent for this in Brazil. There were some systems of evaluation, but the results were never published by school. There was a certain fear about what could have come of that.

MALVINA TANIA TUTTMAN: I consider it important to reflect on the significance of this evaluation. Until recently, the objective was just to classify, to rank. And this is over now, both nationally and internationally. The important part about the evaluation today is to use it to diagnose problems.

TEXT SLIDE: Ceara is Brazil's 17th largest state by area and eighth largest by population, with 8 million inhabitants. It is also one of Brazil's poorest states and for years was one of the lowest performers in education.

TEXT SLIDE: In recent years, Ceara has become a showcase for educational reform.

TEACHER: *What letter is that Gabriel? I think it's the letter of "queijo". What is the letter of "queijo"? What is the letter?*

JULIO CESAR DA COSTA ALEXANDRE, *Secretary of Education, Sobral, Ceara:* The reform of the educational system in Sobral was planned under two symbols. First the student, in particular the learning process, and secondly the leading aspect of it all, the school principal.

STUDENTS: *Good morning!*

DOMINGOS SAVIO FERREIRA SOUSA: *Good job! Let's start our day thanking God for this day, that this may be a productive day, that we can read a lot, write a lot.*

DOMINGOS SAVIO FERREIRA SOUSA: Every day we have the welcoming ceremony. It's a time when we bring all of the students together in the courtyard.

TEACHERS AND STUDENTS *singing: It's the time to win! The force comes from inside of you. We will all grow up to be super heroes.*

DOMINGOS SAVIO FERREIRA SOUSA: *Okay, have an excellent day! Have a great class and... Ciao!*

DOMINGOS SAVIO FERREIRA SOUSA: It's a moment of eye to eye communication for the principal, the teachers, the workers, with every single student. The students have come, they are here, they are present. So this welcoming ceremony is important. It's the first moment of our day together.

STUDENTS: *Good morning! Together we can achieve our dreams!*

DOMINGOS SAVIO FERREIRA SOUSA: *Great! Is everything good? Okay. I just wanted a minute of your attention to talk to you guys about... ? Here we go, first thing. For us to learn, we have to be where?*

STUDENTS: *At the school.*

DOMINGOS SAVIO FERREIRA SOUSA: *Attendance. Your presence here in the classroom, studying with the teacher. Okay?*

JULIO CESAR DA COSTA ALEXANDRE: It was necessary that leadership arrived in the school to clean house, to make everything work in a rational way, in an intelligent way. And that's the function of the principal. Our principals, they know how to read the results. They know how to create a strategy from what they read in the results.

DOMINGOS SAVIO FERREIRA SOUSA: *I just came here to have this time with you guys, to talk about the importance of reading with you. I'm going to ask one more time, who has their books? Okay lift them up!*

JULIO CESAR DA COSTA ALEXANDRE: In the year 2000 we had an evaluation that revealed that 48 percent of children did not know how to read. They didn't know how to read texts, phrases, or words. Sobral faced a situation that academics labeled as "school illiteracy". Schools were producing illiterate people.

TEACHER: *In this way the pig continued on his walk through the forest. A little later, he stopped by the beach, and he found a huge swordfish! And he stopped and asked, "why do you have a long nose?"*

DOMINGOS SAVIO FERREIRA SOUSA: The whole municipality, every single school, especially ours, started to aim towards this one focal point. Because we believe that

reading is the primary thing that opens up a world of possibilities for the child. They travel in the world of imagination. Each book that they read, each story that they hear, they travel to a different world.

STUDENT: *reading out loud.*

TEACHER: *Okay, you need to be careful. Some things you are reading, for example, what word is this?*

STUDENT: *“parece”*

TEACHER: *When you read it, you read “aparece”. You are putting letters where there aren’t letters.*

JULIANA MARIA LEITE TEIXEIRA, *Education Coordinator, Jose Da Matta E Silva:* Every week we call them for reading time and then we detect what needs to be improved. This support is what helps us determine how to enhance the development of each student. The individual follow-up is what makes the difference. It’s about doing it student by student.

DOMINGOS SAVIO FERREIRA SOUSA: *The scale helps us to visualize who has a better result, and help those who are not reaching those levels. Because it will all be numbers, 170, 180, 190, 200.*

DOMINGOS SAVIO FERREIRA SOUSA: My relationship as a principal with my teachers is a very open one. We talk, we exchange ideas in an easy way. We come into the classroom and we’ll sit and watch the class very naturally. We observe the class, we take notice of how the class routine is going. There are no issues about it. If we realize that we need to give some kind of pedagogical assistance, we call them individually and we talk. The school attendance index is a very important issue. Because if the student is not in school, and not in the classroom, how is he going to learn? We have a staff person who is in charge of going into every single classroom, every single day, all 200 school days in our calendar, and she checks the attendance of every single student.

DOMINGOS SAVIO FERREIRA SOUSA: *Okay, how many students were missing today?*

STAFF MEMBER: *There’s one from third grade.*

DOMINGOS SAVIO FERREIRA SOUSA: *Hi I’m calling from the school Jose da Matta e Silva. Is this Elena? Hello, this is Savio the principal of the school. How are you? I would like to know about Isaias, I would like to know why he is not at school today?*

DOMINGOS SAVIO FERREIRA SOUSA: Once she has the list of who is absent she comes to my room, and we proceed with the phone calls. Which in our school we

call the phone project. Why do we call it the phone project? Because we use the telephone.

JULIO CESAR DA COSTA ALEXANDRE: *We looked at the learning results. Each one of you received your individual results, per school.*

JULIO CESAR DA COSTA ALEXANDRE: Every week we have an 8 hour meeting with all of the principals. This happens at the city hall auditorium. The topics are always related to what is happening in the schools at the time.

JULIO CESAR DA COSTA ALEXANDRE: *I just want to remind you all to be at peace, be tranquil. Yes of course the results could be better, but it wasn't a disaster. Like our results being bad. But they aren't bad, they are just things that need to be improved.*

JULIO CESAR DA COSTA ALEXANDRE: In the beginning there was a big difference between some principals and others. There were schools that had progressed a lot, and some schools that had not progressed at all. We realized that it was the contact among them, the socializing, the interchange among them that made it possible for everyone to learn from the best principals.

TEXT SLIDE: Ceara's education outcomes have improved. Ceara raised its IDEB index from 3.2 in 2005 to 4.4 in 2009 for grade 4; from 3.2 to 3.9 for grade 8; and from 3.3 to 3.6 for grade 11.

TEXT SLIDE: This moved Ceara out of the lowest performing group to rank 14th among Brazil's 27 states.

MARIA IZOLDA CELA DE ARRUDA COELHO: One of the most powerful incentives for teachers, and all educators in the public education system, one of the most powerful incentives is the achievement of results. To create a culture of being accountable, to the school, to the students, and to the community. This is very powerful.

JULIO CESAR DA COSTA ALEXANDRE: To be a teacher in Sobral today, to be a principal, an educator, a staff member of the education system, is a reason to be proud. Our teachers stand up and say, "I was the one who taught reading and writing to Joao, or Maria, or Jose". And they are proud of that. It's a project that has a beautiful banner to fly. We rescued the teaching profession.

TEXT SLIDE: In PISA 2000, nearly 56 percent of Brazilian 15-year-olds were at Level One or below. In 2009, this proportion had fallen to just below 50 percent.

TEXT SLIDE: From 396 in 2000, Brazil's average PISA score in reading rose to 412 in 2009.

TEXT SLIDE: In mathematics, Brazil's PISA score rose from 356 in 2003 to 386 in 2009. And in science, Brazil's PISA score rose from 390 in 2006 to 405 in 2009.

FERNANDO HADDAD: We establish goals taking into consideration the unique situation and background of each school and district. We give them this freedom, so that each school and district can develop their own strategies to reach the goals, observed as the national guidelines. The fact that we gave this freedom, made Brazil into a huge laboratory of innovation and best practices. Each state is looking for their own path in light of their own reality and their own tradition, knowing that there is a national objective that needs to be followed.