



CORONASHOCK AND EDUCATION IN BRAZIL: ONE AND A HALF YEARS LATER



Dossier n° 43
Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research
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CoronaShock is a term that refers to how a virus struck the world with such gripping force, revealing the incapacity of the bourgeois State to prevent a health and social catastrophe; it refers to how the social order in the bourgeois state crumbled, while the social order in the socialist parts of the world appeared more resilient.

Introduction

The first case of COVID-19 in Brazil was officially registered on 26 February 2020. Since then, life in Brazil has become even more difficult not only because of the disease's disastrous impacts on human health, but also because of its social impacts. CoronaShock has brought more austerity, deepened financialisation, aggravated the harmful effects of the neoliberal State, worsened labour relations, and wreaked havoc on the education sector.¹

One and a half years since the beginning of the pandemic in Brazil, it is possible to better evaluate some of its effects. The most visible immediate aspect of the pandemic has certainly been the sudden suspension of in-person activities and the temporary closure of schools and universities. As a result, emergency remote teaching activities were put into place, generally without the adequate technological infrastructure, didactic material, or prior training of

teachers. All of this unfolded in the midst of an economic and social crisis in which educational institutions played a fundamental role.

This dossier – the result of a broader research project entitled *CoronaShock and the Financialisation of Education in Brazil* and conducted by the Front Institute for Contemporary Studies and Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research (Brazil) – seeks to begin to assess the effects of CoronaShock on education. To achieve this, we talked with three specialists and militants who work in the education system: Roberto Leher, a tenured professor at the Faculty of Education and the Postgraduate Programme in Education of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ); Margot Johanna Capela Andras, a chemistry professor, director of the Union of Private Education Teachers of Rio Grande do Sul (SINPRO-RS), and coordinating member of the Federation of Education Workers' Associations (FETEE-SUL); and Bia Carvalho, who has a degree in pedagogy from the Federal University of São Carlos (UFSC) and is a militant of Popular Youth Uprising (*Levante Popular da Juventude*)². We talked to them about the various effects of the pandemic on Brazilian education, in particular seeking to understand how mercantile logic advanced through the pandemic and how large corporations in the sector took advantage of the crisis. In addition to briefly contextualising the education system in Brazil, we mapped four principal axes that came up time and time again in the interviews and systematised the dossier into four main themes: 1) the actions of private corporations; 2) changes in the model of education; 3) consequences for workers in the sector; 4) the challenges facing a programme for the struggle.





Brazil's Education System

Free public institutions and paid private institutions coexist at various stages of Brazil's complex education system, the regulation of which was strengthened by the Law of Directives and Bases of National Education (LDB), part of the 1988 Constitution. Early childhood education covers the first five years of a child's life and is compulsory from the age of four. It is divided into nursery school (until the age of three) and pre-school (ages four and five), and it is the primary responsibility of the municipal government. Next comes basic education, which is made up of two stages: primary and secondary education. Primary education is mandatory and universal starting from the age of six for a minimum of nine years it is also a primary responsibility of the municipal government, followed by secondary education, which lasts for three years and, in 2013, became mandatory for students until they turn eighteen and come of legal age. Secondary education is the primary responsibility of the federal government. In Brazil, along with secondary education, students are given the option to attend some form of technical and vocational education. Higher education is optional and the primary responsibility of the federal government.

Universities – especially public ones – serve multiple purposes for students and their families. In addition to the learning process, they provide access to information and communication technologies, spaces of sociability, and sports and cultural activities, and they prevent violence, support students in developing their path in life, and

in many cases, guarantee adequate food for children and young people. Even though educational institutions are in a precarious state, they play a fundamental role for collective life, especially for the poorest sectors of the population.

The crisis of Brazil's education system has a long history marked by severe inequalities, including problems such as a lack of access to education, school dropout rates, underfunding, the poor quality of class materials in educational institutions, low literacy and functional illiteracy, the advancement of commodification, and the presence of a dual structure divided between the public and private sector. It would be misleading to believe that such problems were created by the pandemic: CoronaShock aggravated pre-existing problems and accentuated the disarticulation of the education system as a whole.



The Role of Private Corporations in Education

Brazil has approximately 211 million inhabitants. About 8 million of them are enrolled in early childhood education, 33 million are in basic education, and 8 million are in higher education. One of the particularities of Brazil's education system is the presence of private companies coexisting in parallel with the public sector. Clearly, for the private sector, these millions of students are seen as a huge potential for growth and profit. In 2019, roughly 19% of the country's basic education students³ were enrolled in private schools and 76% of university students were enrolled in private institutions.⁴

Some of the most important education companies are public limited companies (sociedades anônimas), as shown in *Brazilian Education on the Stock Market*, which focuses on mapping these large companies – especially Cogna Educação SA, YDUQS Participações SA, Ser Educacional SA, Ânima Holdings SA, and Bahema Educação SA.⁵

Such corporations are linked to a dynamic of financialisation and reproduce the interests of investors – be they individuals or investment funds – subjecting the quality of education to a speculative logic and the periodic crises of the capital market. These companies operate on different levels, controlling basic education schools, colleges, universities, language schools, preparatory courses for public

exams, selling learning methods and digital platforms, and marketing books and didactic material through their editors.

With the emergence of the pandemic, these corporations saw an exceptional opportunity to cut costs and expand their markets. This is largely due to a systematic policy led by the government of Jair Bolsonaro (who is not affiliated with a political party) that systematically puts public education in a state of precarity. According to Professor Roberto Leher, it became clear that in the context of the pandemic, the Brazilian State proved itself to be out of touch and incapable of producing objective answers to a problem that various other countries have handled much more adeptly. As an example, he points to the absence of a policy that provides universal, public, and free internet access: ‘Unfortunately, resources for the Universal Telecommunications Services Fund (FUST), which is a very robust fund, were vetoed by Bolsonaro. This produced an inequality that is difficult to qualify. But it is brutal and unbelievable that in such a difficult moment, more than half of Brazilian students – about thirty million students in various levels – effectively do not have the conditions to keep up with proper learning interactions and a virtual learning environment’.

Leher reminds us that not only is there inequality and a lack of access to information and communication technologies; there has been no plan to return to in-person activities once the pandemic is under control. This requires a considerable investment in school infrastructure, which includes basic things such as reforms to offer adequate ventilation in classrooms as well as water dispensers and bathrooms. Data from the School Census of 2020 allows us to better

understand this reality: roughly 20% of schools did not have adequate internet, 26% did not have sewage collection, and 3.2% did not have bathrooms.⁶ In addition to being a historical and long-standing problem in Brazil, the low level of investment in education has become worse over recent years with the policy of fiscal austerity implemented by the constitutional amendment approved in 2016, which put a cap on public spending for twenty years. In this context, Leher compared Brazil's approach with that of the United States: while the US allocated around R\$122 billion to public education in 2020, in Brazil, the only plan presented in Congress by lawmakers allocates the value of R\$40 annually per student, which would clearly not allow for adequate infrastructure. Private groups saw new business opportunities in the defunding of public education. The pandemic accelerated a process that was already underway, allowing these groups to continually expand by acquiring smaller companies.

Margot Andras describes how this happened in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, where many groups from the centre of Brazil bought smaller companies. For example, she points to Raiz Educação SA, which bought schools from the Unificado and Leonardo Da Vinci groups, and observes that higher education also provides these companies with a very large return. 'Here in Rio Grande do Sul, Laureate bought UniRitter, even before the pandemic. There are groups coming from Chile, most of them public limited companies of which nobody knows the owners or shareholders, and they are taking over private education'. She emphasises that, for those with money, the pandemic is an opportunity to grab companies that are in trouble – and this is happening all over the country.

One of the most recent activities that propelled the big education groups in Brazil was the sale of the university chain Laureate Brasil, which had until then been controlled by an American company. After intense disputes with other groups, by the end of 2020 Anima Holding SA had purchased Laureate in a R\$4,4 billion transaction.⁷

Public-Private Partnerships – a mechanism through which governments hire the services of private companies – also progressed significantly throughout this period. Through these partnerships, agreements are signed between states and municipalities as well as companies to set up learning projects, didactic programmes, and teaching platforms.

Yet another model of expansion for the private sector that has become common in Brazil is the use of government financing for student enrolments in private institutions. The most well-known examples of this are the Student Financing Fund (FIES) and the University for All Programme (PROUNI). These programmes were promoted by the governments of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (2003-2010) and Dilma Rousseff (2011-2016), who have been widely recognised for democratising access to education for young Afro-Brazilians, poor families, and/or those who come from public schools and are going to private colleges and universities. However, they have also received ample criticism for spending public resources on private institutions. Leher explains that, as a result of these programmes, public funding was used to back the expansion of corporations in the financial sphere; it was precisely in the years that the most public resources were invested in FIES and PROUNI that these companies grew the most.

Today, other proposals of this are progressing on the state and municipal levels. According to Margot Andras, this explains ‘why basic education is the only sector that did not have much of a shortfall in revenue. Why? Children stay in school until the end of secondary education by obligation, or at least until they reach the age of eighteen. So, this is an opportunity for the business community. They found a niche market’. Andras is referring to the voucher programmes through which municipal governments pay for admission in private early childhood and basic education institutions instead of creating more capacity in public schools. Now Bolsonaro’s government is seeking to legally tie the distribution of these vouchers to the beneficiaries of Bolsa Família, a programme to distribute income to the poorest sectors of Brazil’s population.⁸ In other words, through the structural depreciation of public education and its virtual paralysis as a result of the pandemic, private education groups saw new opportunities to grab a larger share of the market, intensifying processes that destroy the concept of education as a right and transform it into a commodity.



Changes in the Model of Education

Capital's offensive against education did not start with the pandemic, but it gained important momentum because of it. One of the factors that favoured corporate groups was the cancellation of in-person classes and the establishment of remote activities that are completely dependent on the use of digital technologies. One and a half years without in-person classes has meant a learning 'blackout' for a large number of children and young people. One of the reasons for this was school dropouts: a UNICEF study shows that by the end of 2020, roughly 1.5 million children and adolescents had abandoned their studies and 3.7 million were formally enrolled but were unable to access remote classes.⁹ This reality represents a historic setback in the universal access to basic education in Brazil, whose impact on the learning process and sociability of new generations is difficult to measure.

Access to information and communication technologies has become a key element in democratising education. As soon as the pandemic started, corporate groups – which had already accumulated experience in distance learning methods with the development of virtual platforms – managed to transition more quickly to remote activities. 'The private sector', Leher explained, 'was much more adept at adapting to the logistics of virtual classes than the public sector'. The private sector also started remote classes much more quickly than the public sector, where this process was much slower and more tortuous.

For Bia Carvalho, there are also economic reasons for this heavy investment in distance education: ‘For these businessmen, distance education is more profitable because it allows them to cut a part of their expenses and it gives them access to a much larger number of students. From the point of view of [looking at] education as a commodity, where they sell classes, distance education makes a lot more sense’. An example of this pattern is the growth of educational technology or ‘EdTech’ companies that invest in the development of technological tools for education. Corporate media tries to give the impression that these companies are created by young entrepreneurs with an innovative and adventurous spirit who found start-ups to develop virtual learning platforms, when in fact it is the big corporations that are driving this process. In other words, corporations in the sector make a strong ideological appeal that education is not keeping up with technological development and that its future depends on the intensive use of digital tools.

This discourse projects the idea that criticism of the current model of distance learning is a retrograde and conservative stance. In the words of Roberto Leher:

we cannot forget that [businessmen] are strongly tied to an ideology that favours globalisation, [and] that it is technology that moves history forward. It brings us back to the ideology of progress – that the future of nations is linked to technological revolutions, and that education wasn’t keeping up with this path. Their main criticism has been that education, especially public education but also private basic education, still followed an analogue Model of Education

from the twentieth century, which has to be updated. And now they have found a way, being a bit pushy, to get their feet in the door of schools.

Leher adds that all of this is linked to the perspective that knowledge can be objectively quantified cognitively and emotionally through discrete units called competencies. Technologies, then, would be a way of delivering these competencies to children and young people, and the teacher would basically become an operator of technologies.

If in higher education distance learning is the model being promoted, in basic education it is the hybrid model that is gaining steam, combining in-person classes and virtual interactions. An example of this tendency is the foundation of a new business association in Brazil that defends the expansion of the hybrid model in basic education.¹⁰

Public institutions have also become a potential market for the consumption of digital platforms. Another shocking problem, Leher stresses, is that there has been no support from the State to make public platforms available to education systems, whether for city halls, states, or universities, which were being held hostage by corporations. 'It became clear that without the private platforms of these big corporations, it would not be possible to maintain virtual interactions in the Brazilian education system. And it is important to remember that this does not stem from an absence of technological knowledge, of ways of developing public platforms. We would be able to enhance existing platforms, which are open systems and not under the control of corporations'. Similarly, Margot Andras asks: 'Did the Uruguayan government not distribute tablets? So, here in

Brazil, they should at least distribute cell phones in public schools for those who do not have access so that they can use this tool in the educational process'. Not only has Jair Bolsonaro's government failed to put forth any positive public policy in this arena; he has also ideologically persecuted teachers, students, and public servants in educational institutions, pushed a programme to put public schools under the management of the military (so-called civic-military schools), and worked to pass a law in Congress that would regulate home schooling.

This combination of factors has resulted in a truly disastrous scenario. In addition to the material and technological difficulties that have led to mass student dropouts, the pandemic has also had major pedagogical and didactic consequences. Leher points out that the public and private sectors have great difficulty in thinking about the idea of virtual interaction in a more dignified and less rigid way. 'We end up adapting ourselves to a logic of replacing in-person classes with virtual ones. And clearly this was not a shift that could have taken place in a simple manner. Very few schools and universities have tried to have more open interactions with the whole of society when it comes to [organising] open study series and having discussions about major problems, major themes, in-depth studies, study groups, etc'. Similarly, Bia Carvalho states that distance learning carries with it a technicist concept that seeks to turn schools and universities into training spaces solely for the labour market. This perspective is gaining steam because a more comprehensive education in which values, knowledge, and experiences are exchanged is much more difficult to put into practice at a distance. Therefore, Carvalho explains, education is reduced to the classroom, 'which is

very bad because being in a school or university provides experiences that distance learning does not. [In distance learning,] the interaction with teachers is greatly diminished, not to mention the immeasurable loss of experiences that take place outside the classroom’.

As we have seen, teaching through digital platforms, which has become an emergency need in the context of the pandemic, is presented by the business sector as a chimaera that represents a new, positive stage in the development of education – and CoronaShock acted as a sort of catalyst for changes that were already underway towards a kind of standardised mass education in compliance with the needs and values of dependent Brazilian capitalism. Despite this, it is interesting to note that, throughout the pandemic, education corporations systematically pressured the Brazilian government to bring back in-person classes, ignoring the health risks of students and education professionals, a push that came largely from the industry’s business associations in line with the political interests of the Bolsonaro government.¹¹

According to Margot Andras, this seemingly contradictory behaviour of the business community is explained by the fact that, although distance learning is presented as the great salvation, in-person activities continue to be the only guarantee of income in a context of crisis and impoverishment of the population. ‘It turns out that many schools gave tuition discounts to families as long as there was distance learning. It’s all about the money. The business community’s interest is: “I need to open the school because if these students come back, I will be able to charge what I used to before”’. Carvalho adds that even with all the hype, distance learning has not been able to

completely replace the roles and function of in-person education. 'The business community has not yet succeeded in establishing distance learning as the solution. Society is not convinced of this. They must have realised that a significant proportion of students were uncomfortable with remote teaching. Perhaps this resulted in school dropouts, which will not be the case when returning to in-person classes'. Since the second half of 2020, these contradictory pressures have resulted in a decentralised and unorganised back-and-forth about the return to in-person activities on a national level at the whim of local lawmakers and without the necessary care or preventive health measures.



The Impact on Education Workers

CoronaShock has also had a profound impact on workers' lives. As with other activities, teaching was mostly carried out from the workers' homes. According to data from the Inter-Union Department of Statistics and Socioeconomic Studies (DIEESE), in July 2020 roughly 10% of the employed Brazilian labour force was working from home.¹² However, the situation is very different when we look at educators: COVID-19 data from the Brazil National Household Sample Survey (PNAD) shows that more than 96% of teachers worked from home between May and November 2020.¹³

As Margot Andras explains, most of the educators who have approached the union complain about the increased workload and fatigue. 'Everyone is exhausted, completely exhausted. Because we no longer have our defined work environment. We get the feeling that we are always working. I think this is happening to everyone. We are stuck at work'. She adds that there is widespread physical and emotional exhaustion among her colleagues and that, as a result, those who have an alternative are looking for another type of job or a change of profession. But this reality is not only psychological in nature – it is part of a qualitative change in the way that work is being carried out as the time and space of work have changed. Education workers have felt this strongly. On top of that, there is also generalised stress:

The workload has accumulated a lot because the teachers have had to spend more time joining WhatsApp groups to reply to students. And this is happening outside of working hours. Now, with the return of in-person classes, teachers are working twice as hard, because in addition to in-person classes they are having to keep up with students in remote classes. And we cannot make the schools – their employers – understand that this is still work.

In other words, the educator's work is no longer located in one place – the school – and no longer has a defined temporality – the class period. Work has therefore become diffuse and almost permanent, in line with platform capitalism, which encroaches on different social activities – including education. In other words, the pandemic has meant the intensified exploitation of the labour force, robbing educators of part of their lifetime. This time is unaccounted for in the working day and is therefore unpaid, guaranteeing an extraordinary profit for the sector's entrepreneurs. This change seems to be here to stay: even with the return of in-person classes, teaching platforms and working remotely will still be part of teachers' daily lives.

Of course, this is only possible because workers fear unemployment. Data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) shows that the unemployment rate has grown sharply from the beginning of 2020 to the present day, breaking historical records.¹⁴ According to data from the General Cadastre of Employed and Unemployed Persons (CAGED), from March to September 2020 approximately 36 thousand teaching positions in the country were removed.¹⁵ The labour reforms approved by

Congress in 2017 under the government of Michel Temer of the Brazilian Democratic Movement (MDB), which withdrew rights and relaxed labour regulations, also contributed to this. As a result, many teachers today are employed through temporary contracts or service provision contracts that deny workers a formal relationship of employment with the contracting company. This work is generally more intense, the pay is lower, and there is no guarantee of labour rights or job security.

There is immense despair coming from teachers who want to keep their jobs as well as those who have had their income greatly reduced, as Andras points out. Regarding teachers of specialised classes, she said:

[F]or example that guy who used to teach football classes after school no longer teaches football classes. What are the schools doing? They are reducing his workload. The same thing happened to the teacher who used to teach music after school. The businessmen say: 'You can't live off that? I'm sorry! There are no students going to music school'. Of course, the fact that there is an internet lag complicates teaching music remotely. So, they reduce these teachers' workloads. And the vast majority of higher education institutions are combining classes because they have the authority to reduce the workload by cancelling classes.

Reports of educational institutions reducing their teaching staff have become common during the pandemic. Professor Rodrigo Mota Amarante, who has taught for over twenty-four years, shared that

in some cases, the termination came unexpectedly as a pop-up message on a computer screen.¹⁶ Examples such as these elucidate how large corporations are using technology to intensify the exploitation of labour. Methods for distance learning require teachers to record their lessons and make them available on teaching platforms. As Bia Carvalho explains, ‘These institutions already used to put a hundred people in the same classroom for in-person classes. Now they teach a virtual class with a thousand people from all over Brazil. The classroom is basically restricted to accessing content’.

This new form of exploitation is accompanied by the expropriation of knowledge. Roberto Leher warns that when knowledge is under the political control of governments or large corporations, ‘we have a loss of sovereignty, didactic-scientific autonomy, and pedagogical pluralism, all of which are constitutional principles at the root of academic freedom. Because of this, we are institutionalising the absence of academic freedom’. A drastic example of this type of expropriation was denounced in April 2020, shortly after the start of the pandemic in Brazil. Teachers linked to Laureate Brasil, a company that controls more than eleven educational institutions in the country, reported that the company had begun to operate an artificial intelligence system called machine learning to correct exams that is capable of recognising patterns in written text, which was used to correct dissertations.¹⁷ All of this was done without the students’ knowledge. Yet other ways that academic freedom is restricted are politically motivated: in recent years, the Brazilian right wing has been persecuting teachers who develop critical teaching methods through conservative movements such as the School without Party

(ESP), or even through the direct use of the repressive police and judicial apparatus.

In Brazil today, there is a harmful convergence between the kind of teaching that has become predominant (especially in private institutions), the increasing precariousness of the work of educators, and the profile of the professionals being trained by these institutions. In fact, Brazil's education system is turning into a training grounds for a cheap and precarious workforce for a country that is in an underdeveloped and dependent condition. This kind of education makes sense in a country that stands out as a commodity-exporting platform that is undergoing a striking process of deindustrialisation, and where the workforce has become a cheap, low-skilled commodity deprived of social and labour rights.



What Can Be Done

The working class, left-wing organisations, and progressive forces have suffered profound defeats over recent years and have not been able to be anything other than defensive. There is a need to construct an alternative project for education in Brazil as the struggle against Bolsonaro's government and its unpopular measures continues – and as the national elections of 2022 approach. With this in mind, we asked our respondents which main points a programme to transform education should focus on. They highlighted three key issues that need to be addressed: the struggle over the educational project and for a new pedagogical concept, the need to renew investments in educational infrastructure, and the need to value, train, and support the professional development of teachers.

First, the pandemic raised a question about the purpose of education – a front on which, Carvalho says, we are losing:

The situation is so severe that the prospects of what people can achieve in life with an education have been diminishing. This issue is not only related to education; it also has to do with the economic crisis that forces families to define their spending priorities and time commitments, etc. I think that the pandemic has also impacted access to higher education. We will begin to see colleges and universities becoming more elite in the years to come. From the student movement's point of view, we will lose the university experience

and the involvement of students who play an important role in struggles and social mobilisations. Because there are people who started university two years ago without ever setting foot there. It is difficult to resume these processes.

Carvalho defends the importance of moving beyond a model of education that is centred on training the workforce and advocates focusing on a more comprehensive model: ‘A popular programme for education begins with the assumption that we understand what education has to be and what role it should fulfil in society. We have to emphasise that education goes beyond preparing for the job market. We have to understand education as a training process that is critical and political – this is an important starting point’.

A new model of education also relies on new pedagogical concepts. According to Margot Andras, a positive aspect of this conjuncture is that the difficulties experienced during the pandemic have helped to clarify what works and what does not work in education: ‘This new kind of school will have to have a more multi-pronged in-person class that is more connected to the reality of the students. Because the teachers have realised that the kind of class that only focuses on content does not work. Those who had not realised this yet have now seen that there is no other way’. That is why she insists that a new model of education must be open to other aspects of life beyond traditional class content, which will require a higher degree of students’ autonomy. In the same vein, Roberto Leher argues that ‘Increasingly more children and young people want to be at a school that reflects the vibrancy of life. They do not want to be in a bureaucratised school with a standardised model of education that is “McDonaldised” ...

This is not compatible with the lives of children and young people today’.

The second key issue in the education system that must be addressed is the need to invest in educational infrastructure. Leher points out that we cannot normalise the idea that it is possible to maintain a robust public system that responds to social demands, to civil, technological, scientific, artistic, and cultural problems without doing what other countries have done – structure and fund a national public network. He argues that it is necessary to guarantee the allocation of 10% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to education, a goal that was approved by the Brazilian Congress in 2012 and is projected to be reached in 2024. However, members of the Ministry of Education of Bolsonaro’s government have already expressed their intention to reduce this target.¹⁸

Margot Andras argues that the struggle over the education system should include the upgrade and democratisation of technological infrastructure. It is fundamental that students have internet access at school and that they can use digital communication tools for learning, which – as it became clear during the pandemic – can be useful educational tools.

Lastly, valuing teachers is an essential condition for the transformation of Brazilian education. It is fundamental to create regulations that can regulate the new kinds of work that are emerging with the use of information technology. Andras insists that it is necessary ‘to consider everything that a teacher does to be “work” and to remunerate it. That is an objective of this programme. Everything that a

teacher does has to be valued, all of their work has to be remunerated, and a limit has to be established for the use of these digital tools’.

Another part of the process of valuing education work relies on the continued training of teachers and the strengthening of the teaching career, especially in the public sector. According to Leher, it does not make sense that a teacher who works in municipality A earns salary X, while another teacher who works in municipality B earns a salary Y, less than X, while having the same qualifications and working the same amount of time. There has to be a turning point in the country about what it means to be a teacher, and dignified work has to be guaranteed. This touches on the issue of the career. Teachers must have a career that values their unparalleled commitment – that values the professional who undertook this path in life – and that offers specialisation, extension, masters, and PhD courses.

Whether the three principal axes of the fight to transform education – the struggle over the educational project and for a new pedagogical concept, the need to renew investments in educational infrastructure, and the need to value, train, and support the professional development of teachers – move forward depends on the broader context of the class struggle. Without defeating Bolsonaro’s government, any democratic alternative for education will be impossible to realise.





Endnotes

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- 9 UNICEF, *Out-of-School Children in Brazil*, April 2021.

- 10 We referenced the National Association of Basic Hybrid Education (ANEBHI). For more information see <https://anebhi.org.br/> (accessed on 11 June 2021).
- 11 Among these associations, it is worth noting the pressure exercised by the National Association of Private Universities (ANUP), the Brazilian Association of Maintainers of Higher Education (ABMES), and the National Confederation of Educational Institutions (CONFENEN). For more information, see <https://anup.org.br/>; <https://abmes.org.br/>; and <https://confenen.org.br/> (accessed on 11 June 2021).
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