

**SOCIAL IMPACT
STORIES**

MOVIMENTO PELA BASE: MOBILIZING STAKEHOLDERS AND IDEAS FOR THE CREATION OF THE NATIONAL LEARNING STANDARDS

2022



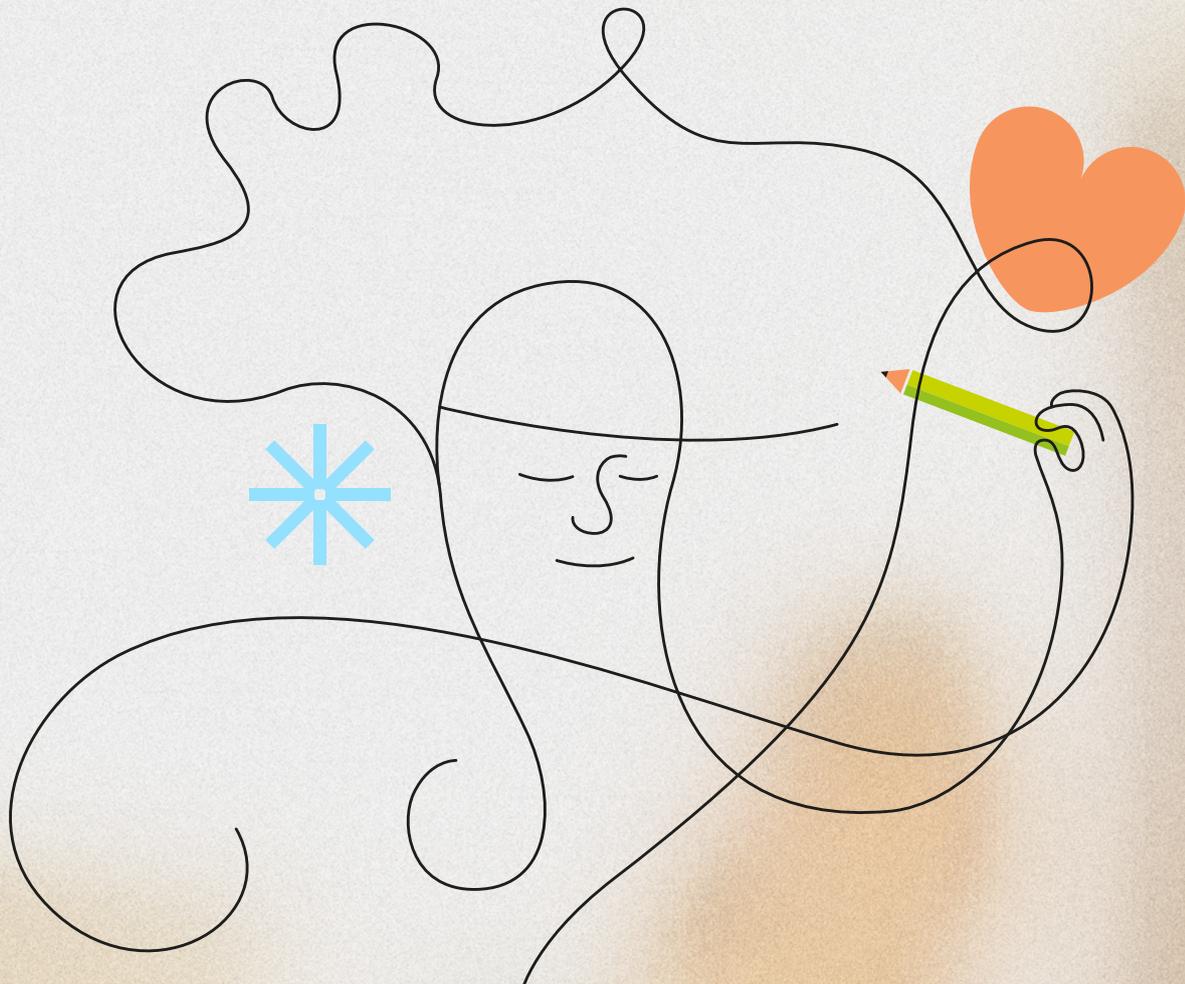


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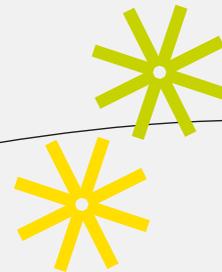
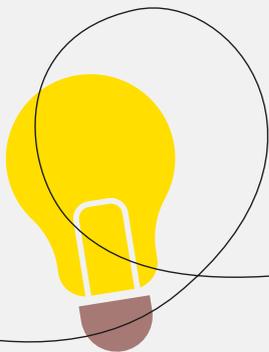




SOCIAL IMPACT STORIES is a series of papers created by the Lemann Foundation and researchers with the goal of systematizing and sharing good practices and lessons learned from civil society actions aimed at overcoming common challenges over the last decade. The stories featured in the series were chosen because they can inspire other agents of transformation, inside and outside Brazil.

THIS IS THE FIRST ISSUE OF THE SOCIAL IMPACT STORIES SERIES.

This issue's story is about the experience of Movimento pela Base (MPB) in the process of creating and ratifying the Brazilian National Learning Standards. With the growing importance of civil society's participation in public policies, we will learn about MPB's journey and lessons learned in the mobilization of stakeholders and ideas around quality education for all.



MEET OUR RESEARCHERS

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INTRODUCTION

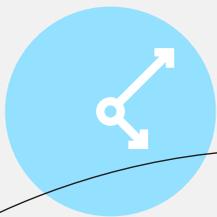
Changes in educational policies to safeguard education rights have been adopted in many countries. If at first they focused on improving educational results through the adoption of results-based assessments and control systems, more recently they have sought to build capacities within the educational systems to guarantee students have access to education and that they stay in school, improve quality, and increase educational equity. In this context, the creation of national guidelines and parameters is essential to reduce inequalities across local governments, which is particularly relevant in an unequal federation such as Brazil.

Although changes depend on the decisions made by government stakeholders, civil society actors, especially those who dedicate their work to education, played a key role in these processes. Civil society movements are critical in drawing attention to contentious causes (Costa, 2018; Iñiguez, 2003). Whereas formal institutions tend to be perennial and maintain the status quo, it is usually the social movements that introduce new subjects in the public agenda, defending specific causes, and promote new impact-driven actions.



In Brazilian history, civil society organizations often stood opposite to the State—as was the case in the military dictatorship that ruled the country from 1964 to 1985—leaving little room for dialogue and joint action. Therefore, it is important to recognize recent changes in this relationship, including the efforts made by organized groups, especially those that focus their attention on issues as urgent as education.

This paper aims to cast light on the relationship between the State and civil society and its implications in the recent changes in Brazilian educational policies. In particular, it seeks to tell the story behind the design process, institutional strengthening and results obtained by Movimento pela Base (MPB), and its role in getting the National Learning Standards ratified in 2017 and 2018.



These changes were the fruit of coordinated action by a coalition of several government and non-government stakeholders with different ideas and interests. MPB's role was to promote engagement between them as part of the so-called "medium-range institutional fit" (Lavalle et al., 2018) in the context of the Standards' ratification process.



The institutional interactions between government and organized civil society, according to Lavalle et al. (2018), can be understood as an "institutional fit" between such stakeholders, from a power-distribution perspective among the several social actors. The "institutional fit" is achieved by actors who mediate the interests of different groups, and these interactions between such groups can be isolated or part of a medium-range effort, in which the relative fit between the stakeholders can produce a long-lasting environment for collective action.

MPB is the result of an engagement effort by organized civil society groups, education experts, governments, and private institutions that strive for a common goal: to ensure technical quality and political legitimacy in the process of creating and implementing National Learning Standards in Brazil. MPB is, therefore, one of the actors that promoted "medium-range institutional fit" in this context.

In order to shed light on how the relationship between the State and civil society—and MPB, in particular—influenced the recent changes promoted in Brazilian education, we will describe:

1

THE STANDARDS'
CREATION AND
RATIFICATION
JOURNEY

2

MPB'S BACKGROUND
AND ITS ROLE IN THE
STANDARDS' CREATION
AND RATIFICATION
PROCESS

3

MPB'S PRACTICES
AND WHAT
STAKEHOLDERS HAVE
LEARNED FROM THEM

4

MPB'S POTENTIAL
ACTIONS IN THE FUTURE



To achieve this goal, we analyzed the data collected from documents and semi-structured interviews with 11 internal and external actors that played a critical role in the organization's journey, focusing on those who participated in the construction of the Standards from 2015 to 2021, such as experts and representatives of government agencies, MPB, and supporting organizations.

This study shows that **civil society organizations can help build consensus on topics of public interest**, contributing to changes in public policies. In the case of MPB, the organization had the crucial role of maintaining stability in the process of designing these changes despite the tense, unstable political context that saw several education ministers come and go and a presidential impeachment in 2016. MPB's task was to bring together various actors and foster engagement among them. In doing so, it promoted a deeper and broader connection among key stakeholders, such as the Ministry of Education (MEC), the National Council of Secretaries of Education (Consed), the National Union of Municipal Education Managers (Undime), the National Education Council (CNE), the National Union of Municipal Education Councils (Uncme), and the National Forum of State and District Education Councils (Foncede).





THE MAIN MILESTONES IN THE HISTORY OF THE STANDARDS AND MPB

2013 to 2015

Period in which MPB seeks to make the Standards a relevant topic on the public agenda for Brazilian society. To that end, MPB:

Hosted **national and international consensus-building meetings**

Conducted **studies and research** to inform discussions

Promoted **engagement among key education stakeholders** and constant dialogue with government actors

Negotiated agreement on position papers describing the minimum consensus achieved on the Brazilian Standards

1988

The **Federal Constitution** is enacted, providing for national learning standards in Article 210

1996

The **Educational Guidelines and Standards Act** is signed into law, shedding more light on the need to create national learning standards

2010

The **National Curriculum Guidelines** are defined to provide schools and school districts with guidance on curriculum planning

2013

The two editions of the **seminar “Leading Educational Reforms”** are hosted by Yale University (USA) and the Lemann Foundation—one in New Haven (USA) and another in Campinas (SP)—with the goal of underscoring the need for national learning standards in Brazil

MPB is created by some seminar participants and other education stakeholders

2014

The **National Education Plan** is signed into law, including targets to address the urgent need for nationwide standards

2015

The Ministry of Education drafts the **first version of the National Learning Standards**

MPB hosts the International Seminar “National Learning Standards: what we can learn from national and international evidence”

The Ministry of Education starts the **public consultation** process on the first version of the Standards. MPB launches **campaigns to mobilize** teachers to participate in consultations and contribute to the creation of the documents. MPB also partnered up with teachers, Brazilian and foreign experts, and educational entities to write critical analysis papers on the document



2016 The Ministry of Education drafts the **second version of the National Learning Standards**. MPB writes **analysis papers** highlighting common points, changes and the progress made from the first to the second version

The Ministry of Education provides funds to support the organization of **state seminars** to discuss the Standards document. MPB provides **technical support** in the seminars, in partnership with Undime and Consed, helping to mobilize participants and draft consensus documents

2017 The Ministry of Education drafts the **third version of the National Learning Standards** for Early Childhood, Elementary and Middle School. The National Education Council holds **regional public hearings**.

MPB takes part in the hearings, **presenting recommendations** made by national and international experts on the Standards and **facilitating the participation of key stakeholders**, such as teachers, experts and scientific entities.

The National Education Council ratifies the Standards for Early Childhood, Elementary and Middle School

2018 The Ministry of Education drafts the **third version of the National Learning Standards** for High School. The National Education Council holds **public consultations and hearings** to discuss the text.

MPB gathers **critical analysis papers** on the document, **organizes events and prepares technical materials** on the topic.

The National Education Council ratifies the Standards for High School

2019 **Standards' implementation begins** after the approval of new state and municipal curricula

Teachers and principals' positive perception about the effects of the Standards ([CAEd/UFJF, 2021](#)) and the adoption of new Standards-aligned curriculum frameworks in all states of the country and 99.7% of Brazilian municipalities ([Implementation Observatory, 2022](#)) bear witness to the importance of all the effort devoted to the Standards!

2018 to 2022

Since the Standards' full ratification, MPB has supported states and municipalities in the preparation for putting the Standards to action in the classrooms, monitoring implementation and helping to ensure coherence and quality in this process.

Here are some of MPB's main actions to this end:

Writing Standards implementation **handbooks** and providing technical support

Supporting the collaboration between states and municipalities for the **creation of Early Childhood, Elementary and Middle School curricula**

Advocating for Standards-aligned national policies

Creating the **Implementation Observatory** to assess and monitor progress all over the country



MAIN LESSONS LEARNED FROM MPB'S WORK IN THIS PROCESS

- Bringing together and engaging with **different organizations and stakeholders** around a **common goal** is critical to the success of the cause
- Creating **safe spaces** for people to talk, trust each other and find common ground is the starting point
- Presenting **evidence and concrete data** helps to bridge gaps and establish a common vocabulary for the discussion of conflicting ideas
- Constantly sharing **messages on which all stakeholders agree** is an important strategy to ensure cohesion and continuity of actions
- **Being prepared and flexible** to provide the necessary support to decision makers is more important than simply sticking to the plan
- Raising **visibility** of information helps to recognize progress and avoid setbacks
- Building **legitimacy** around the subject and the whole field is essential for continuity



MAIN CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STANDARDS' CREATION AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS TO EDUCATIONAL POLICIES

- Furthering the discussion on **students' learning rights**
- Improving **school districts'** ability to participate in the **discussions on pedagogical policies**, such as curriculum and teacher training
- Including **education professionals** in educational policy discussions
- Expanding **collaborative activities**, creating a community around the field of educational policy
- Strengthening **collaboration** between states and municipalities
- Bolstering **Education Councils'** engagement in discussions on pedagogical policies

HOW DID THE IDEAS FOR CHANGES TO THE BASIC EDUCATION CURRICULUM COME ABOUT?

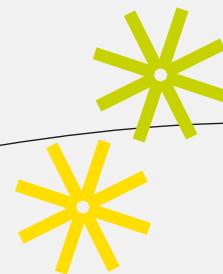
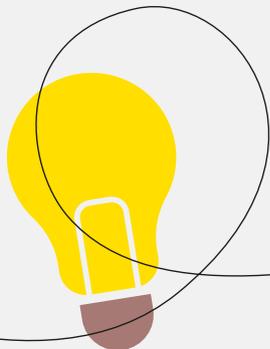
Since the enactment of the 1988 Federal Constitution, important changes have been adopted in Brazilian educational policy. They focused first on expanding access to education, especially to the Elementary and Middle School levels, as the Constitution provided for universal access to these stages of schooling. The result of this effort was the creation of the Basic Education Maintenance, Development and Teacher Promotion Fund (Fundef) in 1996, which redistributed funds according to the number of enrolled students, thus seeking to encourage states and, particularly, municipalities to expand their offer. In addition, national guidelines were signed into law in the second half of the 1990s, such as the Educational Guidelines and Standards Act, which provided guidance on the creation of common content and learning standards; the National Curriculum Parameters, and the National Curriculum Guidelines, which sought to guarantee minimum standards both for the organization of the educational system and students' learning, safeguarding every child and youth's right to education (Abrucio, 2010; Segatto, 2015).





The institutionalization of assessment and information systems, which came as the result of strengthening the National Basic Education Assessment and the School Census, was instrumental not only for the implementation of some of these changes, such as Fundef, but also to put learning center stage in the conversation (Segatto & Abrucio, 2017). It is true that learning goes way beyond what external assessments can measure. It is also true, however, that only through systematic implementation of assessments were other changes introduced to protect students' right to education across the whole country.

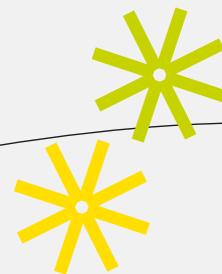
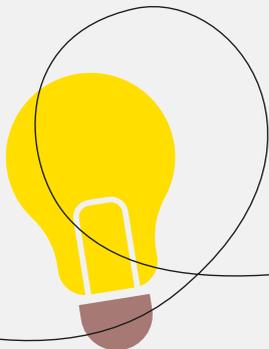
As a result, the following decades saw several transformations. In the 2000s, more focus was placed on reducing inequalities and promoting equity (Alves et al., 2021). Free and universal access to basic education became mandatory for children aged 4 to 17 years, and access to Early Childhood Education and High School was expanded. Other assessment tools were also created, such as Prova Brasil and the Basic Education Development Index (Ideb), as well as several programs that sought to foster actions to improve learning in the most vulnerable schools.





This journey culminated in the introduction of a number of targets in the National Education Plan in 2004 that aim to advance access, especially to the schooling stages that do not have universal coverage yet—Early Childhood Education and High School—in the constant pursuit of greater quality and equity in education. Every child and youth’s right to education, which was already enshrined in the Constitution, the Educational Guidelines and Standards Act and the National Curriculum Guidelines, was further safeguarded in the National Education Plan through specific targets, including provisions that set a deadline and procedure for the creation of learning standards.

Within the scope of the discussion around quality and equity, the decision to create and ratify national learning standards was introduced as a key pillar of the process of guaranteeing common learning rights across the whole country—thus turning the focus of the discussion about quality and equity onto the beneficiaries of the policy: the students.





As some interviewees indicated, adopting common learning standards ensures that all students will share similar learning objectives, even those who live in the most vulnerable and unequal contexts. On this subject, one of our interviewees underscored that “being born in a place where the government cares for education can’t be a matter of luck.”



According to Abrucio (2005), strengthening the policies that encourage cooperation between all level of government—one of the objectives in the adoption of national standards—is critical to optimize the use of common resources, to help governments with reduced capacity to carry out certain tasks, and to better integrate the public policies that they share.

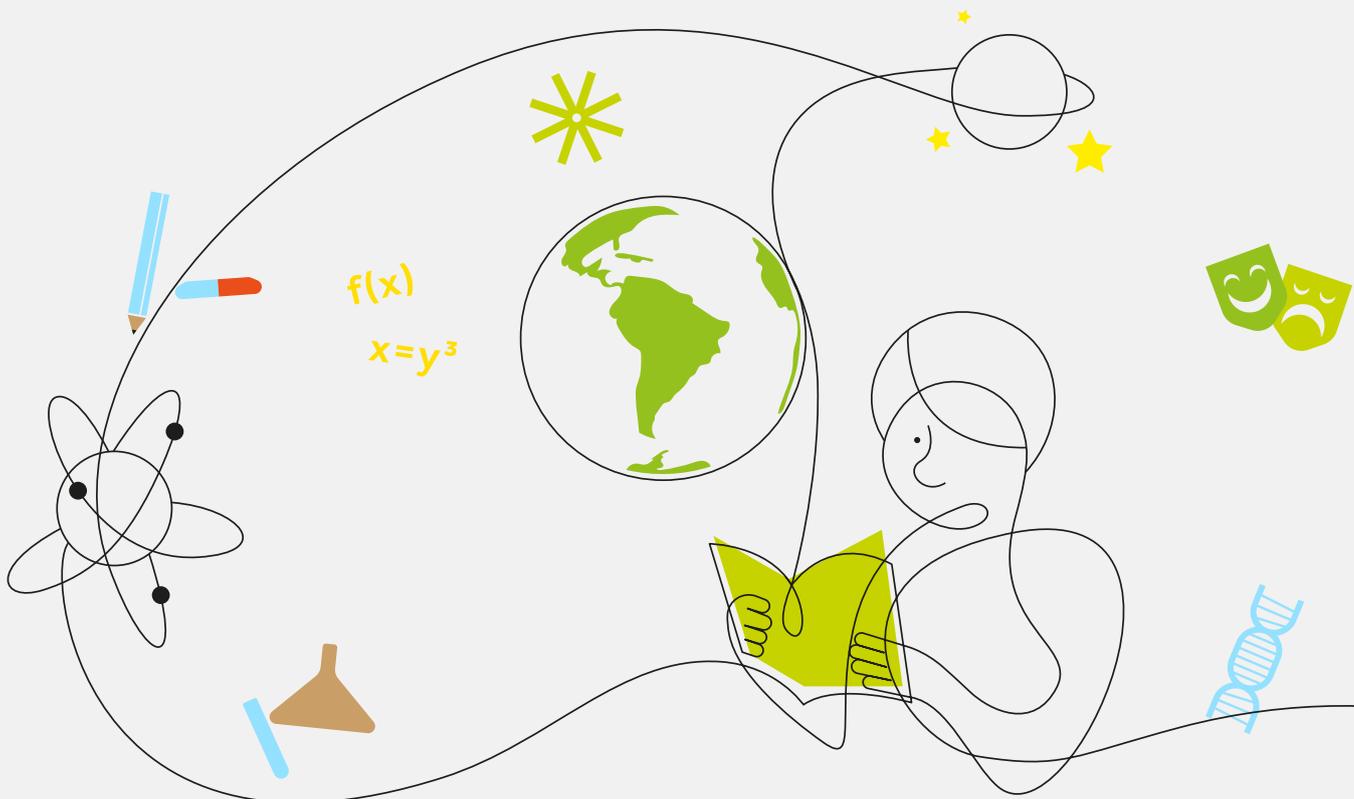
National guidelines and parameters, such as learning standards, can function as a nationwide coordination mechanism as they establish minimum common instructions and requirements, reducing heterogeneous, uncoordinated policies. In fact, the specialized literature describe them as essential, especially in unequal federations such as Brazil (Abrucio, 2005; Arretche, 2012; Obinger et al., 2005).

It is important to highlight that national learning standards constitute a national regulation in federative countries, that is, while they allow for the diversity of characteristics and dynamics of different regional contexts, they also redress socioeconomic inequalities, which in turn reflect in each government’s budget and management resources



and, consequently, their educational policies. In addition to greater coordination, which is crucial in federative countries, the creation of national guidelines is a key mechanism to align the different elements of educational policy, especially local curriculum frameworks, teacher training, instructional materials, and assessments.

Thus, national learning standards establish the essential knowledge that all children and adolescents have the right to learn, which is indispensable to ensure greater equity, while respecting the pluralism of pedagogical ideas and concepts, as determined by the Constitution, leaving room for agency in the choice of “how” to teach, a decision that is made at other levels—by state and municipalities when they create their own curricula, and by school managers and teachers in the implementation of these curricula.



Brazil is not alone in the adoption of nationwide curriculum standards. Other federative countries, such as Australia, have also undertaken important national reforms in their education systems, and centralizing the curriculum is one of the main pillars in these reforms (Capano, 2014). Even countries like the United States, which opted for a decentralized approach on many fronts, have made headway in ratifying the adoption of national coordination mechanisms, such as the “Common Core.”



In her comparative analysis between OECD countries and the Latin American region, Louzano (2014) identified three main curriculum policy models, showing that no country grants schools full autonomy with respect to the content to be taught:

- 01.** Highly centralized direction on what to teach, little centralized direction on how to teach (e.g. Portugal, Chile and Mexico)
- 02.** Little centralized direction on what to teach, no centralized direction on how to teach (e.g. Finland, New Zealand, Australia and United States)
- 03.** Highly centralized direction on what to teach, highly centralized direction on how to teach (e.g. Cuba)

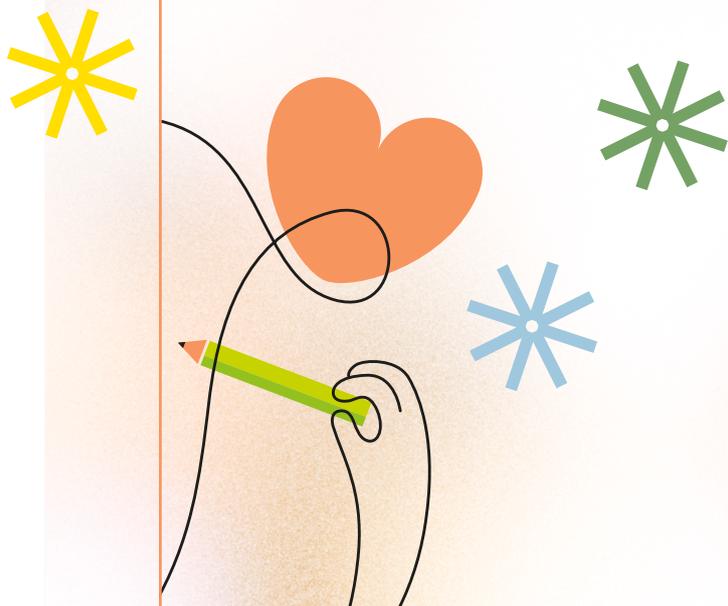
Despite varying degrees of prescription and autonomy, no country with world-class education leaves it up to schools and teachers to fully decide what students should learn, revealing the importance of national learning standards (Louzano, 2014).

The specialized literature on the Brazilian context shows that there were disagreements in the creation and construction of the Brazilian National Learning Standards, which will be analyzed further down in our article. The main ones relate to the decrease in schools' autonomy and the predominance of private interests in educational policy (e.g. Costola & Borghi, 2018). These disagreements should be addressed in the debate on curriculum in the coming decades, but the interviewees pointed out that the consensus on the creation of the Standards comes mainly from the fact that they establish a national parameter that seeks to reduce inequalities in the pedagogical, budgetary and administrative capacities of the different state and municipal education departments. The Standards also connect different facets of policies, increasing coherence and strengthening the systemic nature of Brazilian education—a characteristic already present in other social policies, such as Healthcare and Welfare (Franzese & Abrucio, 2013).



THE PROCESS OF CREATING THE BRAZILIAN NATIONAL LEARNING STANDARDS AND MPB'S CONTRIBUTION

The Standards are a common starting point for school districts to design their curricula and all public and private schools to develop their pedagogical plans for Early Childhood, Elementary, Middle and High School. The Standards define the knowledge, attitudes, values and skills that together form the competencies that all students have the right to develop throughout basic schooling.



The Standards are the result of a journey that strengthened the coordination between all levels of government around educational policymaking. Check out below the main changes made possible by this effort¹:

1988 FEDERAL CONSTITUTION

Article 210 of the Constitution provides for the definition of minimum content to ensure common basic education and respect for national and regional cultural and artistic values in Elementary and Middle School stages.

1996 EDUCATIONAL GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS ACT

The Educational Guidelines and Standards Act, in Article 26, provides for the adoption of nationwide common standards for basic education, and that they must be complemented by regional and local curricula.

1997 NATIONAL CURRICULUM GUIDELINES

-2013 The National Curriculum Guidelines (CNE/CEB Resolution No. 04/2010), in Article 14, underscore the need for national basic education standards and define them as the “culturally produced knowledge and values expressed in public policies (...).” Based on the Guidelines, the National Curriculum Parameters were created, with further specifications for each subject.

2014 NATIONAL EDUCATION PLAN

The National Education Plan sets out ten guidelines and 20 goals and strategies to guide Brazilian educational policies from 2014 to 2024. The Plan also underscores the importance of cooperation among all levels of government in the execution of the country’s educational policies, strengthening collaboration around the creation of nationwide learning standards.

1

For a more detailed description, check out the article [“Currículo da Educação Básica no Brasil: concepções e políticas”](#), (Basic Education Curriculum in Brazil: concepts and policies), by Guiomar Namó de Mello. Accessed on December 15, 2021.



As the Standards were included in numerous legal frameworks, **they began to look more like a State policy, rather than a single administration’s policy.** This can be seen in the very path that the Standards treaded over the years, plowing through a number of different administrations and parties since their creation until their actual implementation.

The first version of the Standards was drafted in the 2015 by a group of writers assembled by the Ministry of Education, with the support of Consed and Undime. This group included over 100 experts and teachers of different fields appointed by universities and state and municipal education departments. During that period, in partnership with the Ministry, MPB² fostered dialogue and exchange of experiences between experts and writers, holding the International Seminar “National Learning Standards: what we can learn from national and international evidence.” The seminar was organized by MPB and its institutional partners together with government agencies. In the seminar, the participants learned about national and international experiences, including from the United Kingdom, Chile, Australia and the United States, through presentations given by key actors in the design of learning standards in those countries. Over 150 people attended the event, including researchers and technical staff from state and municipal education departments.

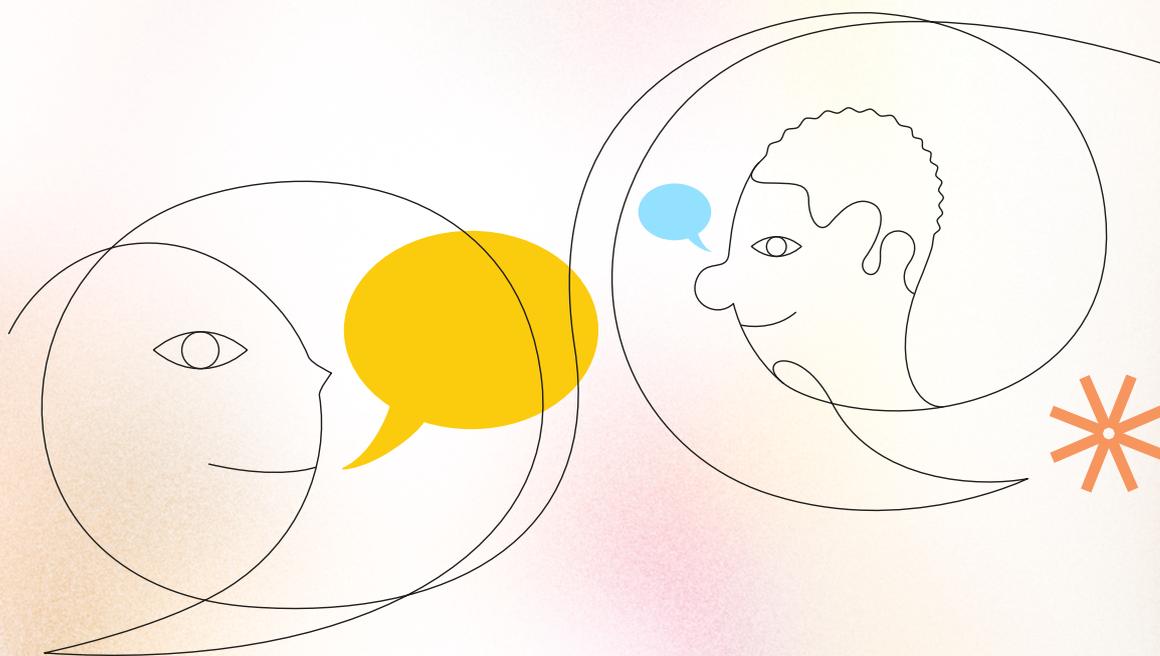
2

MPB was created in 2013. Learn more about its journey since its foundation to the present day in the next section



The Federal Government opened the first version of the Standards to online public consultation for six months, from September 2015 through March 2016. MPB launched a campaign to mobilize teachers to participate in the consultation and contribute to the creation of the document, encouraging decision makers to engage with those who would eventually teach the Standards in the classrooms. **The discussion on the Standards needed to reach the right people.** To make that happen, MPB also mobilized approximately 120 teachers from all over Brazil to critically analyze the document, and these analyses were formally submitted as technical contributions to the Standards' design process. MPB also asked Brazilian and foreign experts to voice their opinions, for example, on Portuguese, Mathematics, General Competencies, Early Childhood Education, the structure of the Standards, high expectations, and curriculum progression. It also encouraged entities representing school districts, as well as scientific entities, to carry out analyses and publicly state their position on the document. These contributions are just a few of the more than 12 million contributions submitted by over 200 thousand teachers, schools, non-profit organizations and scientific entities through the public consultation platform. The inputs received through the online platform were sorted by a team from the University of Brasilia and incorporated into the second version of the Standards, which was published by the Ministry of Education in May 2016. The analysis of the shared elements, changes and potential advances between the two versions, supported by the experts' feedback, was another important element of MPB's contribution to the debate.

Another point raised by MPB during the discussions of the second version of the Standards was the possibility for states and municipalities to carry out discussions and make proposals in a collaborative way, since there was consensus between Undime and Consed on the progress made from the first to the second version. Subsequently, with the support of MPB—which analyzed and identified the points of agreement and facilitated the hiring of Comunidade Educativa CEDAC, which provided technical support to Undime and Consed—the two entities mobilized the municipal and state education departments and jointly discussed the second version of the Standards. Over three thousand municipalities and all state education departments participated actively in the seminars held in all 26 states and in the Federal District, with the financial support of the Ministry of Education. Nine thousand educators engaged in discussions that yielded 27 reports containing reflections and recommendations organized around main pillars, and a national report presenting the main points of consensus, which was also submitted to the Ministry. Based on these documents and discussions, the Ministry drafted the third version of the Standards.



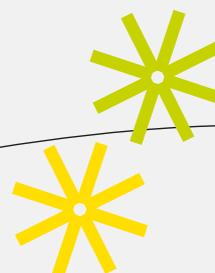
The stakeholders had another chance to have their say in events promoted by CNE during the phase of validation of the third version of the Standards for the Early Childhood, Elementary and Middle School stages³, after the Ministry submitted the text to the Council. Five regional public hearings were held from June through September 2017. MPB took part in the hearings, presenting recommendations made by national and international experts. It also facilitated the participation of key stakeholders, such as teachers, experts and scientific entities. The final version of the Early Childhood, Elementary and Middle School Standards was approved in December 2017 by CNE.

It is important to highlight that since the third version, the High School Standards followed their own separate path from the other stages, as decided by CNE, because it was necessary to take into account the provisions of the High School Reform Act. Just like the Standards for all the other stages, the High School ones were no less a priority for MPB.

The High School Reform is a separate process from the implementation of the Standards. Nevertheless, due to its enormous impact, the Reform was integrated into the process of changing the curricula. There were disagreements among the members of MPB and other stakeholders on the terms of the Reform, but they all recognized that there was a window of opportunity for advancing the agenda.

3

The third version of the High School Standards was made available only in 2018.





The term “window of opportunity” was coined by Kingdon (1995) to describe the convergence of three streams that allow a given issue to emerge onto the public agenda: the problem stream (when the issue to be resolved receives attention); the policy stream (availability of a viable alternative to solve the problem); and the political stream (favorable political conditions to address the issue).

Changes in High School were understood as necessary by most actors in the educational field, but there were disagreements about specific points of the Reform and its ratification process, as it was signed into law by means of Provisional Presidential Decree No. 746 on September 22, 2016 and ratified by Law No. 13415 on February 16, 2017.

The 2014 National Education Plan not only provided for the creation of national learning standards, but also indicated the need to increase the High School net enrollment rate. Such provision reflected a consensus that High School needed to be reformulated to reduce dropout rates and increase learning. To tackle these challenges, the text itself recommended a High School Reform in order to encourage the adoption of interdisciplinary practices and flexible curricula with mandatory and optional content. The discussions on the High School Reform and the Standards took place simultaneously. In 2017, the Ministry delivered to CNE the third version of the Standards for Early Childhood, Elementary and Middle School at the same time as the discussions around the High School Reform advanced.





With the High School Reform, the third version of the High School Standards was separated from the Standards for the other stages and, while the latter were approved in 2017, the third version of the High School Standards was not submitted to public consultation by CNE until April 2018, and the public hearings were held by the Council from May through September 2018. The High School Standards were finally approved in December 2018. As with the other phases of the Standards' creation, MPB contributed with several actions, including critical analysis papers on the Standards and the new National Curriculum Guidelines for High School and Technical Education, materials that indicated points that deserved attention in the proposal and how it was communicated, as well as events on the subject. In November, the High School Curriculum Guidelines were delivered to CNE and ratified by the then-President Michel Temer. The same happened with the High School National Learning Standards in December 2018.

After their ratification, the implementation of the Standards involved several decisions by state and municipal governments, as they needed to design their own curricula, train in-service teachers, and adapt instructional materials and assessments to the new Standards. However, the previous policies and resources varied across the different state and municipal governments, which impacted the implementation of these changes. According to our interviewees, since the creation of the Standards and right after their ratification by CNE, when implementation started, Consed and Undime were pivotal in the promotion of engagement among governments and civil society organizations, especially MPB. The coordination among states facilitated by Consed, and between states and municipalities by the Consed and Undime, was essential for the policy to make progress throughout the country, despite technical and financial challenges.

MPB'S JOURNEY IN ENGAGING WITH STAKEHOLDERS TO MAKE THE STANDARDS A REALITY

The history of MPB is intertwined with that of the cause for which it stands. This section will describe how MPB evolved, including with regard to the Standards' creation journey, its many participants, leaders and main events that culminated in their ratification for the Early Childhood, Elementary and Middle School stages in 2017 and, subsequently, for High School in 2018.

It is important to remember that the notion of adopting nationwide learning standards had already existed in Brazil for decades. In fact, it was provided for in several legal frameworks, such as the 1988 Federal Constitution and the Educational Guidelines and Standards Act, and concrete steps had been taken toward the definition of national learning standards, first with the Parameters and later with the National Curriculum Guidelines. At the same time, several education stakeholders disjointly advocated for a greater advance toward making learning rights more explicit and objective. They called for better performance monitoring tools throughout the entire school journey, and not just with large scale assessment at the end of students' schooling. They argued that learning rights should be taken into account in the very design of the pedagogical policies that aim to protect them and that this process should start with common curricula.



In 2013, a diverse group of government officials, experts and organizations within the field of education got together to identify the causes and agendas they all shared. In this gathering promoted by the Lemann Foundation, it became clear that curriculum standards ranked high in their list of priorities and that they were all striving for progress on this front.

After the meeting, still in 2013, Yale University (USA) and the Lemann Foundation organized two editions of the seminar “Leading Educational Reforms”—one in New Haven (USA) and another in São Paulo. The events gave everyone involved an appropriate environment to debate and plan strategies for the creation of national learning standards for Brazilian students. The guests included representatives of the Federal Government, Undime, CNE, the São Paulo State Council of Education, and the Education Commission of the Lower House, as well as National Institute of Education Research and Studies’ technical staff, members of the Congress, and state and municipal education secretaries.

Several participants remained united around the cause. As other actors joined—such as scholars, non-profit organizations and members of the public sector—MPB was created that year. It should be noted that MPB’s activities and meetings have been possible thanks to the financial support of civil society institutions devoted to education, such as the Lemann Foundation, the Natura Institute, Itaú Educação & Trabalho, the Maria Cecília Souto Vidigal Foundation, and the Unibanco Institute, as well as the technical support of partners such as Comunidade Educativa CEDAC and the Center for Education Research, Culture and Community Action (Cenpec). Additionally, MPB has maintained constant dialogue with decision makers—including the Ministry of Education, CNE, Consed, Undime, and the National Congress—since its very first actions⁴.

4

[Check out](#)

the organizations and stakeholders that are currently part of MPB.



The first challenge faced by MPB was defending an agenda that was not yet a consensus in the broader public debate, in an environment of intense political polarization. In the midst of political upheaval, the group began a series of studies with the aim of expanding and deepening its knowledge and debating evidence-based information about the cause.



The year 2013, in which MPB was created, was marked by the so-called “June Journeys,” a series of protests provoked by public transport fare increases in some Brazilian capitals. The protests culminated in a wave of demonstrations against all levels of government and agendas ranging from public transport to education, healthcare and the need of a political reform. In 2016, the political scenario became even more turbulent with President Dilma Rousseff’s impeachment. These events illustrate a period of intense polarization and political turmoil with which MPB had to cope until the Standards were ratified—and even longer than that, considering that such instability continues to this day.

In the first phase of its work, from 2013 to 2015, MPB focused on **making the Standards a relevant topic on the public agenda for Brazilian society**. Here are some of the strategies used to achieve this goal:

1

HOSTING NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONSENSUS BUILDING MEETINGS

Since the creation of MPB—with the Standards as its priority and the need to engage various actors around the cause—to the discussion of the key points to be addressed in its work, the group held decisive meetings with diverse stakeholders, including with officials of all levels of government and political leanings, experts of different technical and pedagogical orientations, and non-profit organizations.

2

CONDUCTING STUDIES AND RESEARCH TO INFORM DISCUSSIONS

During this period, over 30 surveys were carried out⁵, including case studies and translations of other countries' benchmark documents on learning standards.

5

Here are a few examples: Curriculum Centralization and Standardization: Positions and Position Taking; Organization of States around Curriculum Frameworks for Lower and Upper Secondary Education; and surveys with teachers and school district managers about their perspective on learning standards. You can find some of them at: [Para Implementar / Movimento Pela Base](#)

3

ENGAGEMENT AMONG KEY EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS AND CONSTANT DIALOGUE WITH GOVERNMENT ACTORS

MPB was constantly striving to make different stakeholders be heard and to keep them informed about the Standards agenda, strengthening their sense of participation throughout the process, the quality and legitimacy of the discussions, and ensuring that they all had prior knowledge on the subject and the opportunity to be weigh in the debate.

4

NEGOTIATING AGREEMENT ON POSITION PAPERS EXPLAINING THE COMMON UNDERSTANDING THAT GUIDED MPB AND STAKEHOLDERS' WORK FOR THE STANDARDS

At this first stage, MPB agreed on seven principles to guide the creation of the Standards. This document consolidated the group's common understanding on the process they would advocate for. Another important step during this initial stage was writing the "Concept Document of Movimento pela Base," the product of contributions and approval from the group. The document explained the group's shared vision about what national learning standards and their principles should be.

MPB'S SEVEN PRINCIPLES⁶

1. Focus on the essential knowledge, skills and values that everyone must learn as part of their all-round development and the development of society. The Standards should focus on the essential knowledge, skills and values for life in the 21st century so as to ensure all students can fulfill their right to learn and fully develop into people who are prepared to exercise citizenship, continue their studies, work and contribute to a better society.

2. Clarity and objectivity: The Standards will provide clear and objective guidelines for educators on what children and youth must learn at each stage of basic schooling. Clarity and objectivity will also allow parents, guardians and society in general to understand and monitor if all students' learning rights are being respected.

3. Evidence from national and international research. The Standards must be built on the lessons learned from other common curriculum standards aimed at the development of 21st century citizens, from Brazil and other countries, supported by scientific studies or systematized empirical experiences.

6

Document "Movimento pela Base Nacional Comum" (Movement for the National Learning Standards), made available by Movimento pela Base.

4. Mandatory for all Basic Education schools in Brazil. The Standards must be a part (although they won't be the whole) of the curricula adopted by all schools in Brazil.

5. Cultural diversity is an integral part of the Standards. Cultural diversity will be included in the Standards in all aspects shared by all Brazilians.

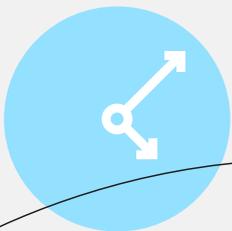
6. Respect for the autonomy of states and municipalities to design their curricula and of schools to create their pedagogical plans based on the Standards. The states and municipalities will design their curricula to complement the Standards with the knowledge, skills and values that are essential in their specific contexts. The schools will continue to decide on the instructional practices ("how to teach") to be adopted so that students fulfill these learning goals and on learning assessment methods, in line with the assessment system in place in the country.

7. Collaboration among the Union, States and Municipalities, and public consultations. The National Learning Standards must be created in a collaborative effort from all levels of government, and must be submitted to broad, but objective consultations to be carried out in well-defined timeframes, with the participation of basic education schools, teacher training centers, education councils, the National Congress, students, parents, organized civil society, and other relevant groups.





As of 2015, a second phase of MPB began, which culminated in the ratification of the Standards by the Ministry of Education in 2017 and 2018. MPB's goal in this period was to **promote the creation of the Standards in a realistic, participatory, well-informed way**, advocating for the engagement, at all stages of the process, of key stakeholders, including Basic Education teachers, school district managers and technical staff, scientific entities, experts, and scholars. Although the very need for common learning standards was still debated—which continued to be the object of MPB's attention—the focus was now on providing high-quality inputs to inform the discussions on what the Standards should be and how they would be designed. To answer these questions, having a broad, solid host of materials that had been created, discussed and assimilated collectively by key actors was critical to make MPB's narrative and actions more concrete. In addition to MPB's engagement with the Ministry of Education, interactions with Consed and Undime—institutions that actively participated in the creation of the Standards—intensified.





In 2016, after President Dilma Rousseff’s impeachment, political changes happened in the Ministry of Education and the National Education Council. As one of the interviewees pointed out, the opposition was now the government, and the government became opposition. In this landscape, the role of Consed and Undime proved even more important, as the changes in the Ministry brought uncertainty, and there was a risk that political turmoil at the federal level could negatively affect the implementation in schools.

The network of actors mobilized around the cause made sure to keep discussions about the text going. The opinion article “Os estudantes não podem esperar” (Students cannot wait), published on May 2, 2016⁷ in Folha de São Paulo newspaper, was signed by 44 representatives from various organizations involved in the Standards discussion. The text underscored the Standards’ nature as a State policy—and not a single administration’s policy. It also placed the student at the center of the discussion and highlighted the need to continue moving towards the ratification of the document.

The creation of the Standards itself brought its own set of challenges. Many relevant education stakeholders did not agree to discuss the Standards in the interactions promoted by MPB or in any other circumstance. They were not against any specific point in the text, but opposed the very notion of the Standards, as they were considered a mechanism to reduce school autonomy and control teachers, and also

7

[Click here](#) to read the article. Accessed on December 15, 2021..

due to the fact that corporate institutes and foundations participated in the design process, as mentioned above. Other more conservative groups pushed for a reduction in the elements related to diversity, especially of gender, in the text. In the opinion of our interviewees, though, openness to all viewpoints was essential for the process to have not only technical quality, but also political legitimacy.



One of the critical changes that would improve the quality of education in Brazil is the creation of National Learning Standards. The document should clearly define the essential knowledge that everyone must acquire in their school journey. The Standards should function as a backbone of the education system.

[...]

Moving on towards the creation and implementation of the Standards, without disruptions or initiatives that push us back to square one, is a commitment that must be made by everyone committed to providing a better future for children and young people. Besides, it is necessary for the fulfillment of legal provisions.

Excerpts from the opinion article entitled "[Students cannot wait](#)"

In the second phase, MPB worked on the following fronts:

1

MOBILIZING TEACHERS TO PARTICIPATE IN PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS AND HEARINGS ABOUT THE STANDARDS

MPB launched campaigns to mobilize teachers from all over Brazil to participate in public consultations and hearings about the Standards. It also brought in teachers to contribute with more in-depth critical analysis papers, which were submitted as technical inputs during the first version public consultation process.

2

MOBILIZING BRAZILIAN AND FOREIGN EXPERTS TO VOICE THEIR OPINION

MPB invited national and international experts to participate in seminars, offer feedback and write critical analysis papers on different aspects of the Standards. It also commissioned critical analysis papers on the High School Standards and the new High School and Technical Education Curriculum Guidelines.

3

ENCOURAGING SCHOOL DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES AND SCIENTIFIC ENTITIES TO PARTICIPATE

MPB enlisted several entities to analyze and state their position publicly on the Standards documents and to participate in public consultations and hearings promoted by government agencies and entities.

4

DRAFTING ANALYSIS AND POSITION PAPERS

Between the different versions of the Standards, MPB analyzed the elements they had in common, the changes and potential improvements, always based on experts' opinions. For the High School Standards, it prepared materials that indicated points that deserved attention in the proposal and how it was communicated.

5

IDENTIFYING COMMON GROUND BETWEEN CONSED AND UNDIME AND ENCOURAGING COLLABORATION

MPB encouraged Consed and Undime to engage states and municipalities in collective discussions based on an analysis of the elements on which the two entities agreed. MPB also helped in the hiring process of Comunidade Educativa Cedac, which provided technical support to Undime and Consed for the mobilization of municipal and state school districts, including by writing reports containing the reflections and recommendations made by them in state seminars. These reports were organized around main pillars and submitted to the Ministry of Education.

After the ratification of the Standards, a new phase began: their implementation by states and municipalities. Several decisions had to be made at the state and municipal levels related to curriculum design, teacher training, assessments and instructional materials. For MPB, this meant new tasks: those of monitoring implementation and ensuring greater coherence and quality in the process, as well as providing technical support to put the Standards to practice in all school districts

in Brazil. A notable example of these actions is the technical support that MPB provided in the formulation of the “Standards Implementation Handbook.” Published in 2018, the document brings suggestions to help school districts prepare for the implementation of the Standards.



MPB has been working on this goal for five years, with a host of strategies for its activities. Although this phase that started in 2018 and continues to this day is not the focus of our study, here are some examples of what MPB is doing today:

1

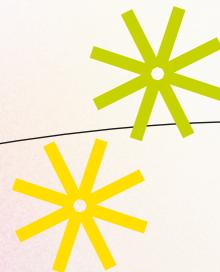
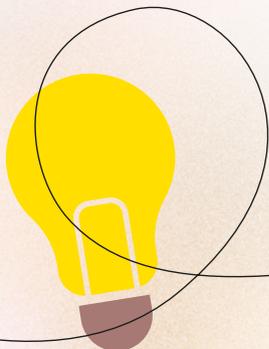
IMPLEMENTATION MONITORING

Implementation has been monitored by initiatives such as the [Implementation Observatory](#), which aims to give visibility and transparency to the Standards and the New High School implementation progress, also promoting a better understanding around these policies. The Observatory gathers quantitative (such as weekly updates on new curricula) and qualitative data (such as good practices and news).

2

PRODUCTION OF TECHNICAL INPUTS TO SUPPORT THE COHERENT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STANDARDS

MPB produces videos, supports the formulation of implementation handbooks, offers technical support to the government and non-profit organizations in the creation of guidance documents, and disseminates courses and materials on the phases of implementation.



3

ANALYSIS, CONSENSUS MAPPING AND ADVOCACY

MPB works so that the national policies that impact the implementation of the Standards (such as the Basic Education Assessment - SAEB and the National Book and Instructional Material Program - PNLD) are aligned with the Standards and conduce to their implementation.

4

DISCUSSION ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE STANDARDS

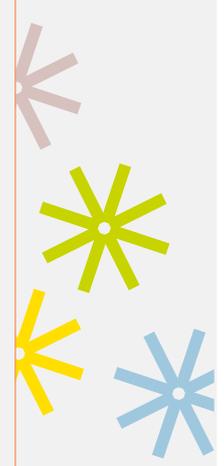
It is also part of MPB's scope to encourage discussions on the revision of the Standards, seeking to ensure legitimacy and quality in the process.

It is important to highlight that MPB's work in the implementation phase of the Standards entails changes in the actions and organization of the institution. This phase brings new lessons, perspectives and challenges that are not addressed in this case study, as our focus here is to cast light on the discussion and formulation phases of the Standards. Thus, this study leaves room for further research on the changes in the context and in MPB's scope of work in view of the new challenges.

Check out below the main milestones in MPB's journey:

TABLE 1 - MPB'S JOURNEY IN A NUTSHELL

Period	Goal	Actions
2013 - 2015	Making the Standards a relevant topic on the public agenda for Brazilian society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizing and disseminating technical studies and events Engaging with actors within the educational field Communicating with the press and civil society
2015 - 2017	Contributing to the Standards' legitimacy and quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experts' review of the versions of the Standards Training Standards' writers Creating opportunities for teachers and other actors in the educational field to be heard Gathering inputs to inform the discussion
2018 - 2022	Supporting states and municipalities in the preparation for putting the Standards to action, monitoring implementation, and helping to ensure coherence and quality in this process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing Standards implementation handbooks Supporting the collaboration between states and municipalities for the creation of Early Childhood, Elementary and Middle School curricula Providing technical support Advocating for Standards-aligned national policies Creating the Implementation Observatory



LESSONS LEARNED AND CONTRIBUTIONS

MPB learned many lessons in the process of creating the Standards, and this journey also contributed to the emergence of other educational public policies. This section will present some of the lessons learned mentioned by our interviewees so that other movements can derive inspiration from them in other processes of building coalitions around public agendas.

MAIN LESSONS LEARNED FROM MPB'S WORK



A

Bringing together and engaging with different organizations and stakeholders around a common goal is critical to the success of the cause

Bringing in all kinds of organizations within the field of education to work toward a common priority gave voice to stakeholders that still had not had the chance or time to focus on a specific goal and find ways to achieve them. The creation of MPB was critical in keeping focus and producing robust, high-quality, reliable information.

**B**

Creating safe spaces for people to talk, trust each other and find common ground is the starting point

Rarely do people with different backgrounds, political stances and world views meet and identify what they agree on, building minimal consensus. This process takes hard work and intention. All MPB meetings and gatherings were carefully planned and included activities designed to give people an opportunity to speak and interact with each other. According to one interviewee, “we didn’t just put the whole group in a room and open the microphone.” MPB learned that it was important for the entire group that was working toward the same goals to build trust-based relationships by learning more about each other’s background. This was the starting point to find respect and ways to continue our joint efforts aiming at shared, higher objectives even amid disagreement.

**C**

Presenting evidence and concrete data helps to bridge gaps and establish a common vocabulary for the discussion of conflicting ideas

When the discussion about the Standards was abstract, ideological barriers were more difficult to overcome. When MPB brought data, research and studies to the debate, the discussions became more concrete and advanced from the group’s shared knowledge of the true state of affairs. Learning more about other countries’ experiences was of great importance at that time. MPB brought to Brazil experts from Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States, Chile and Portugal to talk about their experience in creating nationwide curricula in their countries. The search for concrete solutions was also critical to support implementation and help states and municipalities make headway in their efforts.

**D**

Constantly sharing messages on which all stakeholders agree is an important strategy to ensure cohesion and continuity of actions

MPB used a wide range of communication strategies to make sure that all messages conveyed by the group of stakeholders working together around the Standards were cohesive and aligned with each other and the concepts and principles agreed upon by the group. These stakeholders performed and are still performing a central role in ensuring continuity and progress throughout the Standards' journey, from making them a priority, to their design, to implementation, which is still ongoing.

**E**

Being prepared and flexible to provide the necessary support to decision makers is more important than simply sticking to the plan

Many civil society actors want to collaborate with government agencies but expect to do so on their own terms. Since its inception, MPB listened to government stakeholders and did everything in its power to be ready and flexible to meet Standards-related needs coming from the federal, state and municipal governments. This posed challenges to MPB's strategy planning and execution actions. On many occasions, however, it was necessary to give priority to providing quick responses to last-minute requests, as they signaled actual issues that decision makers were facing along the process.

**F**

Raising visibility of information helps to recognize progress and avoid setbacks

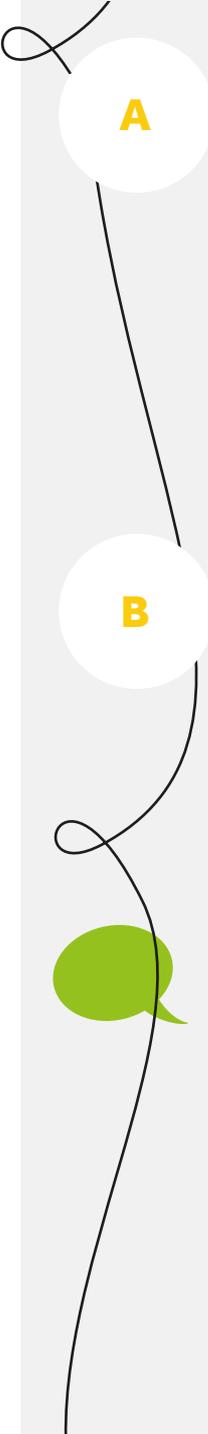
MPB is always trying to anticipate potential difficulties and build consensus among key actors to find solutions. By anticipating the needs of the school districts, MPB finds alternative ways for more progress to be made on the Standards. Therefore, monitoring means not only checking what is being accomplished or not, but also anticipating future issues. Ensuring transparency in the monitoring process also gave the whole country visibility of the advances the Standards are making. By showing that school districts were prepared for implementation, a sense of “no turning back” was created, that is, the Standards could not be easily undone. This has helped avoid setbacks, despite criticism.

**G**

Building legitimacy around the subject and the whole field is essential for continuity

MPB developed several strategies along the way in order to establish itself as a legitimate actor in the Standards debate. These strategies included the production and dissemination of knowledge, engagement with Brazilian and foreign experts and key stakeholders within the Brazilian education system, such as teachers, former and in-service federal agency officials, as well as state and municipal school districts’ staff. Building legitimacy was one of the key elements in allowing MPB to continue its work toward raising awareness on the importance of the Standards for Brazilian education.

MAIN CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STANDARDS' CREATION AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS TO EDUCATIONAL POLICIES



A

Furthering the discussion on students' learning rights

Although there is disagreement about the very need for National Learning Standards, placing them center stage in the educational debate was essential for finding common ground on what students should learn at school. The work is not done yet though. This debate must be deepened and expanded to cover the next steps, such as aligning instructional materials and teacher training to the Standards and executing the plans for reviewing the current Standards.

B

Improving capacity-building at school districts

A critical process of capacity-building has begun at the school districts to deepen the discussions around the Standards and allow them to design their curricula. According to one interviewee, this has been essential for the creation of in-service teacher training at the subnational level, for example, and it will be indispensable in the future discussions and revisions of the Standards.

**C****Including education professionals in educational policy discussions**

Another remarkable feat was the participation of school professionals, especially teachers, in the creation of the Standards and later in the design of curricula and educational pathways by the states and municipalities. The international literature highlights the importance of building the most significant policy changes collectively, bringing in school professionals and state and municipal education officials, such as teachers, school principals and regional managers. Including teachers in the Standards' creation process was critical to make sure that the Standards reflected the schools' everyday elements. Surveys conducted in 2021 by the Center for Public Policy and Educational Assessments of the Federal University of Juiz de Fora (CAEd/UFJF) show that teachers and school managers' perception of the Standards is positive. Collective construction was not only important to align regulatory provisions with the actual implementation capacity in classrooms. It also helped strengthen the Standards' legitimacy as the result of the collaborative work of many, which drove implementation forward. However, according to our interviewees, although the Standards were the product of joint effort, the processes and mechanisms to include education professionals must be strengthened, and special attention must be given to teachers and High School. This will be crucial in the implementation and future revisions of the Standards. Teachers' participation is essential not only because they can lend their knowledge and experience, but also because the implementation of any policy depends on the decisions made by teachers in their everyday activities in schools and classrooms, as proven by specialized literature on public policy implementation

(Lotta, 2019) and educational reforms (Bruns & Schneider, 2016).

Teachers must take part in all stages of the creation of new policies, and innovative processes and mechanisms must be designed to make sure they are included.

Lastly, greater proximity between former and current officials of federal agencies and state and municipal school districts, representatives of civil society organizations and other key actors, such as experts and researchers, was another highlight described as crucial steps to be taken in future phases and revisions.

D

Expanding collaborative activities

Os entrevistados apontam que a participação de atores estatais
Our interviewees said that the participation of government and civil society actors who work in the field of Education in Brazil, especially the Ministry of Education, Consed and Undime, as designers or supporters of the Standards, was critical for establishing collaboration in the formulation and implementation of changes coming from this new policy. A community was created around educational policymaking, including actors of different ideological leanings and profiles, such as experts, teachers, public managers, Council members, among others. Setting a trust-based environment where they could find solutions to concrete education problems together helped them put their political and ideological differences aside and build consensus on the Standards text and their implementation process. That was only possible because all of these actors agreed, and still do, that the Standards are critical for students learning.

When the Standards were signed into law, many stakeholders did not approve of their entire content. Nonetheless, the consensus building process required everyone involved to compromise if progress were

to be made. After all, unanimous consensus on the text was unfeasible. One interviewee mentioned that some key actors negotiated agreement while others compromised on elements they did not agree with, and this was essential for the success of the cause. One example was the article signed by actors with different ideological positions but who advocated for the ratification of the Standards, nevertheless. At that moment, they all understood that supporting the ratification of the Standards was decisive to stand for Brazilian students' learning rights.

E

Strengthening collaboration between states and municipalities

The stronger collaboration between states and municipalities did not stop after the Standards were designed. It continued in the creation of local curricula for Early Childhood, Elementary and Middle School, and has encouraged these actors to share their experiences in the design and implementation of High School curricula.

The stronger relationship between states and municipalities that was forged in this process is one of the main lessons learned from this policy, especially considering how fragmented and decentralized Brazilian educational policies were (Cury, 2008) and how heterogeneous the relations between states and municipalities were (Segatto & Abrucio, 2018). The Ministry of Education and the National Education Council, with the support of institutions such as Undime and Consed, were essential for the Standards to be defended, built and ratified. Considering how the coordination around the policy at the national level became weaker (Abrucio et al., 2020) after 2019⁸, a closer interaction between different states allowed ideas to be exchanged, and the increased engagement among states and municipalities yielded greater coordination.

One of the main results of this stronger collaboration was the decision to create a state-level governance committee with several local

8

The Ministry of Education was extremely active in the coordination of the policy until 2018, but the Ministry's role weakened after 2019 and mainly in 2020 after the end of the Program to Support the Implementation of the National Learning Standards (Pro BNCC) for Early Childhood, Elementary and Middle School.



stakeholders as members. As there is no National Education System, the states do not have commissions with representatives from the municipalities to discuss educational policies as they do in the fields of Healthcare and Welfare. Therefore, the creation of subnational groups to negotiate and build consensus is essential to strengthen coordination and avoid fragmentation, gaps and overlapping.



F

Engagement of actors that “were not at the surface”

At a time when actors such as Undime discussed how the Covid-19 pandemic affected education, the Municipal and State Councils, the National Union of Municipal Education Councils (Uncme) and the National Forum of State and District Education Councils (Foncede) spearheaded the debate on the implementation of the Standards and drove it forward at the subnational level, providing training to their members and taking an active role in the regulation, implementation and monitoring processes.



THE FUTURE OF MOVIMENTO PELA BASE

The results of monitoring the implementation of the Standards for Early Childhood, Elementary and Middle School (Caed/UFJF, 2021) show that the Standards have been integrated into the everyday life of state and municipal school districts, with excellent initial outcomes. The managers that participated in the first stage of the survey highlighted that the Standards allow municipalities to have their own identity reflected in their curricula, foster a closer relationship and engagement between state and municipal school districts, ensure greater alignment between the curriculum and external assessments, encourages teachers' professional development, and gives school districts more flexibility and autonomy in assessing student performance. The report states that:

The Standards are already a reality for education professionals, as an idea and concept. Based on the data we collected, we can affirm that the curriculum is now at the center of how these professional, particularly teachers, perceive their work. (Caed/UFJF, 2021: 27)

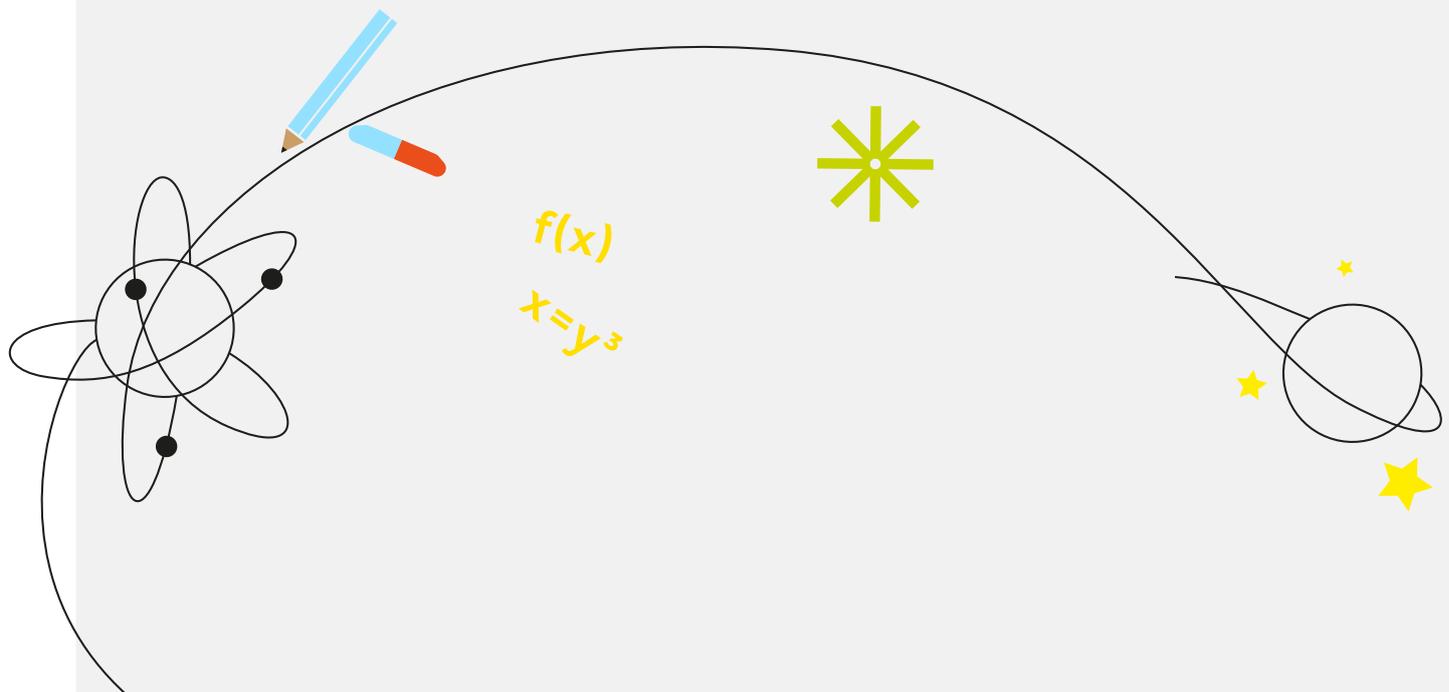
Considering the positive results achieved along the journey of creating the Standards, it is now time to think about the different paths MPB can follow in the future.



One of the functions of MPB is to analyze and monitor the Standards' implementation as it played an active role in their design process and engagement with stakeholders to advance the policy. According to some interviewees, MPB was fundamental in moving forward with the Standards' creation and ratification process despite political changes, and that role has not changed. One respondent said that, with all the political changes and state and municipal education secretaries being replaced after every election, MPB plays a central role in keeping the Standards alive in the classrooms.

In view of its journey so far, MPB recently reviewed its long-term aspiration and stated its vision for the next five years (2022-2026) as follows:

Ensure that schools have Standards-aligned pedagogical practices which uphold the learning and development rights of all students with quality.



In order to realize this vision and continue contributing to Brazilian education, MPB's activities will focus on three main objectives:

1

PROMOTING QUALITY AND COHERENCE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

2

PROMOTING LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY OF THE STANDARDS AND THE NEW HIGH SCHOOL

3

ENSURING QUALITY AND LEGITIMACY IN THE STANDARDS' REVISION PROCESS



Although MPB has a clear vision and goals for its next cycle, its actions in the coming years must be considered in light of the current state of affairs in Brazil and the world. The Covid-19 pandemic posed formidable challenges for education, with children losing almost two years' worth of school experiences, dropout rates soaring, and learning gaps widening. MPB will play a key role in promoting events and conducting technical studies to inform the implementation of the Standards as in-person classes resume and the pandemic continues. This period will require hard work on the recovery front.

9

Quilombos are former runaway enslaved people communities.

MPB's work is also pivotal when it comes to giving local stakeholders a chance to voice their opinion, which is instrumental in informing debates that are participatory and yield realistic technical documents. To this end, MPB can ask stakeholders to assess the Standards' implementation process, including with regard to the constraints imposed by the pandemic. About this topic, one interviewee said that MPB could help systematize and disseminate strategies and initiatives employed by the states and municipalities to advance the Standards' implementation during this period. This is particularly important with respect to decisions that have not yet been defined, such as the implementation High School pathways in quilombola, Indigenous and rural schools⁹.



Advocacy actions are also at the core of MPB's activities—and today there is no shortage of organizations that work in the production of technical documents and other materials (such as courses and videos). Considering the strategic role performed by MPB in the creation of the Standards, the institution could also engage with critical actors, including political candidates in election years, to ensure their commitment to the high-quality implementation of the Standards and every student's learning rights.



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