

Editorial

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The implications of the New Educational Reform in Mexico: towards the construction of a diagnosis through educational research

From the configuration of national states to the construction of the societies of knowledge, school has been the mechanism of socialization with the greatest political and social legitimacy in most countries and societies around the world, mainly because of the virtues bestowed upon it as a social institution capable of preparing new generations for the challenges of the future. Hence its character as a right, an obligation and an experience to which the biographies of childhood and youth of most contemporary societies in the world are ascribed. It is a device with the capacity of shaping identities, ascribing social and cultural belonging, as well as supporting and controlling individuals within it.

This series of current considerations about the functions of the school allow us to discuss its quality as an electoral good and explain why education is also one of the issues with more presence in the speeches and proposals of political representatives. The case of Mexico is not an exception, and in recent years the evolution of public policies on education may be understood through the figure of educational reforms, in a critical and complex context in which the narrative about public affairs, the past, the present, and the future are disputed between the current administration and its opponents.

In very general terms, we may say that educational reforms in Mexico have been a reflection of the historical evolution of educational paradigms and efforts of the governments in turn to deal with the old and new challenges of the educational system at all its levels. Due to their social and political implications, educational reforms are a phenomenon that has historically been the subject of intense public and academic debate. In this sense, it is essential to bring to judgement some of the premises and fundamentals of the New Educational Reform, which presents the so called New Mexican School as an educational model responsible for guaranteeing the minimum standards for Mexican children, teenagers and youths to overcome the conditions of school lag and dropout and be able to fully enjoy their right to a scientific, intercultural and humanistic education.

To achieve these goals, the New Mexican School presents students as the central axis of the educational model and also proposes a reassessment of the teacher as a guarantor of the understanding and transmission of knowledge for the learning of Mexican children and youths, under a set of principles such as the detection of the students' needs and potentialities, attention to cultural and linguistic diversity, collaborative work and linkage with the surrounding community, as well as the development of socio-emotional skills, with an emphasis on the link between education and inclusive social development oriented towards the welfare of wealth. This New Educational Reform also boasts being founded on a huge consultation conducted on fora open to the participation of different actors of the educational system such as teachers, students, principals, parents, and specialists, in which the everyday pedagogical concerns and practical needs of the teachers were discussed in order to outline the challenges involved in the teachers' participation and training.

All the profound changes promoted by the New Educational Reform were accompanied by the release of a new edition of the Free Textbooks. This decision caused the animadversion of some state governments, political parties and the Unión de Padres de Familia, a nationwide parents association, who showed their disagreement through expressions of resistance and opposition that escalated into a lawsuit being filed before Mexico's Supreme Court, which culminated in the partial suspension of the distribution of these new didactic materials in several states.

In this sense, beyond a position in favor or against, this conflict becomes an incentive – and a demand – to reflect upon the historical and political context where the discourse of different actors and groups about the function of education in Mexico emerge and oppose each other, in order to recognize the multiple political interests that make up the atmosphere in which the decisions that shape educational practices are proposed, discussed, and implemented, so that after understanding them we can analyze what is proposed in and through the Free Textbooks, keeping in the horizon their pertinence and scope in regard to education in Mexico.

Rather than reproducing without criticism the principles of the New Educational Reform and the partisan discourses, the emerging conflicts must awaken in the field of educational research a commitment to offer our society reflective research work that allows us to put into question, problematize, and learn about the multiple dimensions and different school contexts in which the implementation of the New Educational Reform takes place in Mexico.

Diálogos sobre Educación. Temas actuales de investigación educativa presents this Issue No. 30 with the challenge of offering the educational community and public opinion knowledge that may allow us to move on from Manichean discourses and construct a diagnosis on the implications and the social, political, cultural, and pedagogical challenges that the New Educational Reform and the New Mexican School represent for the most important protagonists in

the act of educating: teachers and students. Therefore, our sincere thanks to Doctors Luciano Oropeza Sandoval and Alicia Peredo Merlo for having accepted our invitation to coordinate an Issue with such implications, as well as to all of those who participated in it with their papers, which we sincerely hope will be of interest to our readers.

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