

## The new high school as a producer of inequalities: A literature review



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### ABSTRACT

In 2017, Law No. 13,415 was sanctioned, which brings in its text the reform of High School, which in Brazil corresponds to the last three years of basic education and is characterized by the completion of the school cycle. The modification of the guidelines for this stage of education raised controversies and

debates. Therefore, this article aims to analyze the main changes proposed by the New High School and how they are affecting students' education. The adopted methodology was a narrative literature review, and for this, 8 articles were selected as the main sample, using inclusion and exclusion criteria. Based on the results, the reform was pointed out as a possible producer of inequalities that deepen the division between students from public and private schools, increasing the disparity in access to relevant content for the education of young people through elective subjects. Thus, for an effective High School, it is necessary to create public policies that guarantee equity in education, such as the offer of extracurricular courses and investments in technology and teacher training.

**Keywords:** Education, School, New High School, Inequalities.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Basic education in Brazil is mandatory and of fundamental importance for the formation of the individual, it is a right guaranteed by the State, which offers in a public and free way to all citizens, and aims at educational development in order to ensure common training, which is indispensable for the maintenance of citizenship and provide subsidies for further studies and / or continue with the insertion in the labor market (RIBEIRO, 2019). It is divided into three levels, namely: Early Childhood Education, Elementary School and High School.

High School corresponds to the last three years of basic education and is characterized by the completion of the school cycle, this being the moment to deepen the knowledge of the disciplines and prepare the student for the stage of his adult life, marked by his insertion in the labor market, continuation of studies in Higher Education and for human formation, in order to understand the fundamentals of society and exercise its citizenship. Thus, according to Ribeiro (2019, p. 8) "High School is a crucial level of education in the formation of Brazilian youth."

Currently, High School has become the center of debates due to a reform approved in 2017, by Law No. 13,415, but initiated through Provisional Measure No. 746, in September 2016, which brought



in its scope changes in the curricular structure and the form of teaching that was being practiced (HERNANDES, 2019). Among the main changes, we highlight the flexibilization of the curriculum, the extension of the workload, the valorization of technical and vocational training and the emphasis on training aimed at the insertion of students in the labor market.

The New High School (NEM), as it is popularly known, was approved as a response by the Federal Government to the problems encountered at this level of basic education, which cannot reflect a level of use of youth in school (BRANDÃO, 2021). For Vale (2022) the NEM aims to provide students with a series of competencies and high skills, such as critical thinking, multiple learning strategies, analysis, presentation and problem solving, as well as the valorization of the professionalizing aspect.

The reform of the national curriculum in Brazil, especially in relation to High School, is seen as an important step for the modernization of education in basic education (JEFFREYS; PAIM, 2018). Silva and Soares (2020) point out that the curriculum used in schools are partially responsible for the consequences of the success or failure of the teaching-learning process. Thus, the competencies included in the new curriculum approved by Law No. 13,415 meet the methodologies adopted in developed countries such as the United States, Japan, Canada and the entire European Union (VALE, 2022).

However, some questions are raised by society about the effectiveness of these changes, especially about educational equity, when the social origin and experiential contexts of each student are analyzed. Since, in a context of marked socioeconomic inequalities in the country, it is necessary to evaluate how these transformations can impact the provision of educational opportunities for different segments of the population.

Vale (2022) points out that for the implementation of a new competency-based model as proposed by the NEM, which generates a pedagogical change that involves the school in a collaborative and constructive teaching-learning approach, it is necessary to pay attention to the challenge that are the social, educational and regional inequalities present in Brazilian society. That is, changes in education can and should happen, but they must be geared towards social inclusion and cohesion as a whole of society in order to strengthen students' sociocognitive and psychosocial approaches.

Therefore, the questioning of whether this recent reform is capable of producing practical and effective results in the preparation of high school students, understanding the reality and demands of society or if it is just a modification of a curriculum that was developed still in the twentieth century comprehensive, embracing the intellectual, the social and the ethical, so that they are no longer harmed by inequality in public school education.



The flexibilization of the curriculum and the possibility of choice of formative itineraries by the students can result in a natural selection of the most qualified and motivated for the areas most valued by the market, leaving the most vulnerable with fewer opportunities. Thus, this article aims to analyze the New High School as a producer of inequalities, considering the following aspects: curricular flexibility, the valorization of technical and vocational training and the offer of opportunities for the most disadvantaged students, through a narrative literature review with a qualitative approach.

The relevance of this study lies in the fact that the public school, which serves the majority of students in the country, may suffer even more with the flexibilization of the curriculum, since it does not have the same offer of formative itineraries and resources as the private school. This In the sense of discussing the implications of the new curricular organization of High School is fundamental for the debate on the quality and equity of Brazilian education, as well as for the formulation of educational policies aimed at reducing social and educational inequalities.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

It consists of a qualitative bibliographic research, through a narrative literature review that sought to analyze the different views, theories and studies already carried out on the approval of the New High School and its role as a producer of inequalities in Brazilian education. It is worth mentioning that "the bibliographic research has as its main characteristic the fact that the field where the data collection will be made is the bibliography itself on the theme or object that is intended to be investigated" (TOZONI-REIS, 2009, p. 36). Already, the qualitative approach assists in new discoveries and evaluation of alternatives of what is already known (LÜDKE; Andrew, 1986).

Thus, for the development of this review, six stages were considered, namely: elaboration of the objective, development of the inclusion and exclusion criteria, search in the databases, categorization of the information, analysis and presentation of the results. Data collection will be carried out through the survey of relevant and reliable sources of information, such as scientific articles, books and technical reports present in the literature grouped in electronic databases, such as ScientificElectronic Library Online (SciELO), Google Scholar and journals indexed in the Sucupira platform (CAPES) that address the theme under study.

The inclusion criteria adopted were papers published in the Portuguese language, which addressed the New Brazilian High School, established by Law No. 13,415/2017, available online and free of charge, published in the last 8 years, between 2015 and 2023, excluding duplicate works that diverge from the objective, as well as abstracts published in congress proceedings and incomplete articles. The literature selection process occurred in two phases, the first consisted of reading the title and abstract and in the second phase analysis of the results and conclusion, and the works were chosen or eliminated according to the theme.



The categorization of the information followed the technique of content analysis, which allows a deeper understanding of the texts, identifying keywords, categories, concepts and recurring themes in the selected literature. Detailed readings were carried out and systematic organization of data in order to identify patterns and connections between different theoretical approaches. Thus, the information obtained was presented descriptively, allowing the exposure of knowledge on the subject and providing the reader with the evaluation of the applicability of the review.

### 3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

With the application of the inclusion/exclusion criteria and analyses, 8 articles were selected, thus constituting the main sample of this review. Of the eight articles, one was published in 2017, one in 2018, two in 2019, one in 2020, one in 2021, and two in 2022. Regarding the type of study, the sample consists of literature reviews, through qualitative research, in which opinion articles and reflective analysis on the text of Law No. 13,415/2017 are expressed.

Table 1 - Articles used in this review.

Article	Author	Title	Year
A1	FERREIRA, E. B.	The counter-reform of high school in the context of the new order and progress	2017
A2	FERRETTI, C. J.	The reform of secondary education and its questionable conception of the quality of education	2018
A3	ALPARONE, R. B.; MORALES, L. F.	From the reform of high school to the possibilities of popular education: Paths to a counterproposal to the New High School	2019
A4	HERNANDES, P. R.	The reform of high school and the production of inequalities in school education	2019
A5	LIMA, W. S.; SOUZA Mr. C. M.; PINHEIRO, B. B.	High School and its role today: The conception of the students of CIEP Padre Salésio Schimid de Vassouras – RJ	2020
A6	CODES, A. L. M. et al.	High school: context and reform. After all, what is it about?	2021
A7	SEGAL, R. L.	"New High School" as a persistence of educational inequalities?	2022
A8	VALE, N. P.	The new high school and its importance for the young student of the XXI century: considerations and reflections	2022

Source: OWN AUTHORSHIP, 2023.



The NEM, Law No. 13,415/2017, brought significant changes in the curricular structure of the level of education that most forms citizens for adult life. The main proposal was the flexibilization of the curriculum, with the expansion of the workload to 3,000 hours throughout High School, and the division of the disciplines into two large groups: the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC), composed of a minimum set of essential knowledge for the formation of the student, and the formative itinerary, which would allow students to choose between different areas of study, with specific content and methodologies.

Thus, for a better understanding, the discussion was divided into three topics, namely: The Brazilian High School, the Reform of High School and the Perspectives of this Reform.

### 3.1 THE BRAZILIAN HIGH SCHOOL

The Brazilian Federal Constitution (1988) expresses, in its article 205, that:

education, the right of all and the duty of the State and the family, will be promoted and encouraged with the collaboration of society, aiming at the full development of the person, his preparation for the exercise of citizenship and his qualification for work (BRASIL, 1988, p. 123).

Thus, every citizen has the right to basic education, which is divided into three stages: Early Childhood Education, Elementary School and High School. These stages add up to a duration of at least twelve years of education, where students receive in the school environment the transmission of the knowledge produced by humanity throughout its history (LIMA; SOUZA; PINE, 2020).

Ferretti (2018) points out that High School, in Brazil, is the responsibility of each state of the federation, but the definition of its structure and curricular organization is carried out broadly at the national level, through the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDBEN), the National Curriculum Guidelines (DCN) and the National Education Plans (PNE). However, "the policies referred to High School, as, moreover, government policies in general, meet and mobilize interests of a diverse nature, not necessarily congruent, around education for young people" (FERRETTI, 2018, p. 25).

It is worth mentioning that from the beginning, the LDBEN guides the organization of the Brazilian educational process, being cited for the first time in the Federal Constitution of 1934 and sanctioned in 1961 through Law No. 4,024/1961, undergoing a reform ten years later, through Law No. 5,692/1971, which was in force until 1996, replaced by Law No. 9,394/1996, which recently underwent amendment through Law No. 13,415/2017, popularly known as "High School Reform Law" or "New High School". LDBEN deals with the purpose of education, its organization, establishing which are the administrative bodies, the modalities and levels of education, as well as other aspects



that regulate and define education in Brazil (ALPARONE; MORALES, 2019; CODES et al., 2021; VALE, 2022).

High School, in Brazil, has an ambitious goal, which consists in the achievement of studies or professional competence by the largest possible number of people, where education should provide the balance of social differences, but over 200 years of independence, this stage was practically only carried out by the children of the most privileged classes, According to Codes et al (2021), needy young people, from the age of 15, need to work to help with family income, so until recently, high school was not even considered as a path to be followed by this portion of the population.

When it comes to analyzing and reflecting on the Brazilian educational system, it is perceived that there is a consensus that High School is the stage that most provokes debates, either by the problems of access and permanence, or by the quality of the education offered (FERREIRA, 2017). Another point is the low attractiveness that this phase of education exerts on students, since it coincides with the period of adolescence, between 15 and 17 years, and transition from childhood to adulthood. According to Codes et al (2021) it is the moment, commonly, marked by the emotional load arising from the responsibility of making choices that will influence their future lives.

In addition to the challenges of this phase of life, students have to deal with a teaching-learning process full of programmatic contents, which has a significant influence on their academic performance. For Codes et al (2021), High School has an excessive number of compulsory subjects, totaling twelve subjects, namely: Portuguese, History, Foreign Language, Philosophy, Mathematics, Geography, Arts, Sociology, Chemistry, Physical Education, Biology and Physics. Linked to this, traditional teaching lasting 50 minutes per class may be insufficient to arouse and maintain the interest of the student, being necessary to offer more than the current model (FERREIRA, 2017; CODES et al., 2021).

In a simplified way, the model used in the current High School carries characteristics that are due to its long history of implementation, not suffering major changes and currently, due to the saturated project, it needs a transformation, either through its structure or teaching-learning dynamics. The school it must be in tune with contemporary society, this is one of its great challenges. Due to its fragility, the model is constantly questioned, as it does not have a clear purpose, moving between being a door to university entry or professional training (FERREIRA, 2017; FILE; SOUZA; PINE, 2020).

High School for Ferreira (2017, p. 297),

[...] it was constituted in a field of political disputes, and a reform can meet antagonistic objectives, which can both be committed to a critical and reflective formation and reinforce a lightened and/or reductionist formation. The educational policies of the twentieth century were fertile in this second perspective.



With the lack of definition of its concept and the dispute that occurs, it reflects in the conception some difficulties such as the definition of its curriculum, teacher training, quality of teaching, dropout, resources for its maintenance and expansion and levels of approval. These factors hinder the development and learning of students while attending this phase of Basic Education, reproducing the social inequality among young people (LIMA; SOUZA; PINE, 2020).

The debate on the quality of high school implies expanding its offer in order to meet the needs of students so that they remain in school in a situation of equality, understanding youth and their context in order to favor their potential. With this, it is noted that it is necessary to change in High School so that it can contribute to the formation of students in cultural, social, economic, environmental, political, philosophical and human aspects, preparing them for the performance of their role as citizens. Thus, "quality education is closely linked to the transformation of reality in the full construction of citizenship and the guarantee of human rights" (FERREIRA, 2017, p. 297).

### 3.2 HIGH SCHOOL REFORM

In Brazil, the reform of High School was edited through Provisional Measure No. 746/2016 and sanctioned by Law No. 13,415/2017, involving the restructuring of several points, among them the expansion of the workload, the flexibility of the curriculum, as well as the implementation of vocational education (CODES et al., 2021). But Vale (2022) points out that the "New High School" is not really new, since it was already being discussed for some time, since the early 2000s, through the Lula administrations (2003–2010), Dilma Rousseff (2011–2016), sanctioned in the Michel Temer government (2016-2018) and initiated by the Jair Bolsonaro government (2019-2022).

The reform of High School was centered on arguments about the need for flexibility in the training of students and the importance of extending their time in school, in order to bring more attractiveness to this period of basic education and with the objective of providing improved student performance, since according to the evaluation of the Ministry of Education (MEC), Brazil is far below compared to other countries (FERREIRA, 2017). The MEC also argued that the little attractiveness of high school, exists

[...] as a result of an extensive, superficial and fragmented curriculum, which does not dialogue with the youth, with the productive sector, nor with the demands of the twenty-first century, deserving to give young people the freedom to make their own choices of which path to follow, taking into account their own interests (SEGAL, 2022, p. 2).

Given this, undoubtedly, in the literature there are information, research and data that prove the problems related to the attractiveness of high school among young people, who go through the enthusiasm in the first year to the dilemmas of the following years, pondering on the need for the school diploma for professional life, but, on the other hand, there are needs to support the family and



oneself, which causes school to take a back seat, pushing them into the labor market early (CODES et al., 2021; SEGAL, 2022).

High School, by the previous law, No. 9,394/1996, works with 12 disciplines, divided into Portuguese, Mathematics, Geography, History, Chemistry, Physics, Biology, Philosophy, Sociology, Physical Education, Arts and Foreign Language. In this modality, the student studies each discipline independently, not necessarily making a relationship between them, since they do not have a prerequisite to see the content of another discipline. Each teacher worked within their perspective and content, organizing their teaching methodology (VALE, 2022).

In addition, he had a workload of 2,400 hours, divided into 800 hours per year, during the 200 school days. However, with the New High School, the total workload was increased to a minimum of 3,000 hours, being 1,000 hours per year, and the workload will no longer be distributed equally among the areas of knowledge. The NEM adopts that 1,800 hours will be allocated in the equivalent general training and 1,200 in the formative itineraries, where the student will choose his areas of knowledge to compose his curriculum. This makes that schools have to offer full-time classes, about 7 hours a day, to achieve the required workload (CODES et al., 2021; VALE, 2022).

About the formative itineraries, Codes et al. (2021) explains that, they are the flexible part of the curriculum in which the student has the opportunity to choose the disciplines, that is, what he will take according to his preference. The five itineraries are organized through the combinations between the areas of knowledge, the structuring axes and the technical and professional training. But despite the guidelines guaranteeing the right to learning, education systems are required to offer only two formative itineraries and students will have the responsibility to choose a mandatory itinerary or opt for more than one, according to the availability of vacancies.

In this change, Portuguese and Mathematics are mandatorily included in the general training and retain their workload, in addition to maintaining in an integral way the structure of their contents, but all disciplines are divided into areas of knowledge, that is, the formative itineraries, namely: Languages and Their Technologies; Natural Sciences and Their Technologies; Mathematics and Its Technologies; Applied Humanities and Social Sciences; Technical and Professional Training. The disciplines Physical Education, Philosophy and Sociology are mandatorily included, but not during the entire High School, which may mean that they will only be a short-term module. The Foreign Language has a mandatory offer (VALE, 2022).

In this sense, from the reform, the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC) of the MS was approved on December 17, 2018, and consists of a document that directs the reformulation of High School through the delimitation of skills, competences, values and attitudes to be developed and worked on in the school curricula for each area, focused on general education and training itineraries.





In addition, the BNCC, in its text guides the alignment of other actions and policies such as teacher training, evaluation and elaboration of didactic materials (CODES et al., 2021; VALE, 2022).

The NEM is marked by its differential, which is the emphasis given to technical and professional training, having its inclusion as a formative itinerary that, according to Codes et al. (2021, p. 20) "is considered a stimulus for the young person to opt for this alternative". With this, it is allowed to the educational institution, carry out the offer of vocational courses, which will grant the student the professional qualification at the technical level during High School. Also, this itinerary legitimized the performance of professionals without a degree to teach classes as teachers with "notorious knowledge".

The professional with "notorious knowledge", receiving the endorsement to teach classes in schools, is another major change made, that is, it is allowed to people without specific graduation to teach in some courses, but it is mandatory to have proven knowledge in their area of expertise. In the other itineraries, there remains the requirement that teachers have training and licensure in their disciplines (CODES et al., 2021).

In addition, the NEM provides for changes in relation to the resources of the Basic Education Maintenance Fund (FUNDEB), allowing educational institutions to sign agreements with distance education organizations; With this, the activities carried out in the distance modality, contemplating up to 20% of the total workload, can be included both in the formative itineraries and in the basic general training. Also, to ensure the financing of technical and vocational education, it is possible to establish partnerships with employer companies, through a professional learning program (CODES et al., 2021; VALE, 2022).

It is important to highlight that the NEM, approved through Law 13.415/2017, began to be implemented in 2022 throughout Brazil in a mandatory way in public and private schools.

### 3.3 EDUCATIONAL INEQUALITIES

The discussion around social inequalities in the context of education is extremely important, since the educational system can contribute both to reduce and to widen the existing disparities in society. The author Miguel G. Arroyo, in his article "Educational policies and inequalities: in search of new meanings", presents deep and provocative reflections on the need to rethink and reformulate educational policies in order to effectively address inequalities.

Arroyo (2010) emphasizes the importance of a critical analysis of educational policies, going beyond traditional quantitative indicators such as access and permanence in school. It is essential to understand the inequalities present in educational practices and discourses, which often perpetuate stigmas and marginalize certain social groups. One of the central issues addressed by Arroyo is the structural inequality that permeates the educational system, whose meritocratic vision attributes to the individual the responsibility for his failure or success in school, ignoring the social, cultural and



regional conditions in which he is inserted. In the author's view, educational inequalities are a reflection of broader social inequalities and, therefore, public policies should include affirmative and redistributive actions as a way to promote equity (ARROYO, 2010).

Arroyo (2010) also highlights the importance of understanding inequalities in the scope of pedagogical practices, since the school often reproduces, even if unconsciously, exclusionary and discriminatory logics. To counter these logics, the author proposes a pedagogy that values and respects the diversity of knowledge, cultures and trajectories of students, overcoming the tendency of homogenization that neglects individual singularities and potentialities.

Another significant point is the relationship between educational inequalities and evaluation policies. The meritocratic logical critique of graded exams, which tends to favor certain groups and strengthen stereotypes. The author defends the valorization of different forms of evaluation, taking into account the diversity of talents and abilities of the students, as well as the sociocultural contexts in which they are inserted (ARROYO, 2010). In addition, Arroyo emphasizes the importance of dialogue between various social actors in the formulation and implementation of educational policies. It highlights the need to listen to and involve communities, teachers, students and their families in discussions about education in order to build more democratic and inclusive policies.

One of the forms of manifestation of educational inequality lies in the unequal access to opportunities. This disparity can be observed from the earliest years of life, with children from more privileged families having access to quality preschool education, while poorer families face lack of access to daycare and preschools. In addition, access to quality education varies significantly between public and private schools, where financial resources and infrastructure can directly influence the quality of education offered.

Educational inequalities are also evident in regional disparities. In rural and peripheral areas, it is common to find schools with poor infrastructure, lack of didactic materials for teachers and also less qualified teachers. These conditions hinder access to quality education and limit students' learning opportunities in these regions

These inequalities have consequences for individuals and for society as a whole. Students who face barriers in accessing education and who receive low-quality education are less likely to reach their full academic and professional potential. This perpetuates cycles of poverty and social exclusion, limiting their future prospects and restricting their opportunities for growth. In addition, society as a whole also suffers from educational inequalities, as the lack of equal access to education limits collective development and the capacity for innovation.

Overcoming educational inequalities is a complex challenge, but there are approaches and proposals that can be adopted. It is essential to invest in public policies that prioritize equity in education, directing financial and infrastructural resources to the most disadvantaged regions and



schools. In addition, it is necessary to encourage and train teachers, offering them adequate training and encouraging their permanence in less privileged schools. Inclusion programs such as scholarships and access to educational resources can also help reduce disparities.

Educational inequalities represent a significant obstacle to building a more just and egalitarian society. To meet this challenge, a collective commitment is needed, involving government, educational institutions, families and communities. Only through strategic investments, inclusive policies and a joint effort will it be possible to promote an educational system that guarantees equal opportunities for all, regardless of their socioeconomic background, gender, race or geographical location.

### 3.4 PERSPECTIVES OF THE REFORM OF HIGH SCHOOL

When analyzing the applicability of Law No. 13,415/2017, which comprises the current reform of High School, there are major contradictions that focus on the flexibility of the curriculum, which leaves it reductionist, and whether the NEM is the appropriate way to contemplate the interests of young people, in order to improve their pre-existing talents and tastes (FERRETI, 2018). From the beginning, with the implementation of the provisional measure, the changes inserted in High School were the focus of much criticism and, therefore, reflections on the NEM are necessary, in view of the direct and indirect impacts that the practices of this law will reflect on education and the future of the country.

The approval of the NEM was supported by two main justifications. The first consists of the low quality of high school offered until then, and the second was the need for a more attractive curriculum to students, due to the high rate of allowance and failure of them. But Ferretti (2018) recalls that the low quality of education is not limited only to High School, as it is a problem that covers from the first school years, resulting in cumulative gaps and culminate during the last three years of basic education, extending to Higher Education courses.

Still for the author, the high rates of failure and abandonment are not exclusively the responsibility of the organization of the school curriculum, as justified by Law No. 13,415/2017, but occurs due to several factors that are from the inadequate infrastructure of schools, the need to work early among low-income students, teenage pregnancy and family violence. Thus, such reasons, also, should be considered during the elaboration of measures that effectively attack the school dropout observed and guided by the reform (FERRETTI, 2018).

It is inappropriate to attribute failure and abandonment exclusively to the curricular organization, without considering the cultural and social aspects involved. For Martin (2021), it is also necessary to take into account the career of the teacher, which are determinant for the result in such actions, in addition to having a negative influence on failure and dropout rates, since this category has insufficient salaries, causing them to seek other forms of hiring, increasing their workload in order to



overload their function and compromise the quality of teaching. In this sense, it is the teachers who are responsible for identifying the individual needs of each student, offering support and welcoming, making him able to reflect on good levels of encouragement and remain in school.

In the NEM, the exclusion of content present in the general formation raises problematic questions. By leaving these essential contents aside, it completely harms human formation, since the Human Sciences are providers of knowledge for critical analysis and reading of reality. On this issue, Ribeiro (2019, p. 26) points out that

The removal of these contents is not by chance, nor is the obligation to teach Mathematics and Portuguese: these are the knowledge charged in large-scale evaluations that will compose the main Brazilian educational indexes, so important in the argument of the business reformers of education and in the monitoring carried out by multilateral organizations.

And these are also the main knowledge required by the demand for skilled labor. With regard to the increase in the workload, two concerns arise: the first consists of the structures of the schools, related to the financing for the implementation of this policy, since the increase in school activities will generate demands for food, hygiene and rest that must be offered to students. The second is the increase in the workload, a limiting factor of students who work during the day, or part shift, the NEM can generate the exclusion of this portion in the teaching stage (RIBEIRO, 2019; MARTIN, 2021).

By making teaching more flexible, through the formative itineraries, the NEM institutionalizes the differentiated and unequal access to knowledge. For Hernandez (2019, p. 5), public schools "[...] they will have to be content with what the State, in times of fiscal adjustment, can, wants or intends to offer them, except Portuguese, Mathematics and English", impoverishing the curriculum of schools, especially in relation to the areas of Philosophy, Arts and Science, as well as the other disciplines that will have their workload reduced to incipient doses.

In addition, it is evident that not all students have the same conditions to choose the subjects they wish to take. In many cases, public school students, especially those living in regions further away from urban centers, have limited access to information and guidance on the different areas of knowledge and opportunities offered by the labor market. In addition, many students face difficulties in reconciling school demands with extracurricular activities and family responsibilities (ARROYO, 2010).

In this way, curricular flexibility may end up benefiting only the most privileged students, who have greater resources and information to make more conscious and strategic choices. On the other hand, the most disadvantaged students are stagnant, without access to the information and guidance needed to make more assertive decisions about their education. In addition, passing the responsibility of curricular training to the student, makes him not live his adolescence fully, where he has the greatest



contact with different areas of knowledge and is forced to opt for a specialization early (ARROYO, 2010; RIBEIRO, 2019).

The valuation directed to technical and professional education, on the one hand, dialogues with the reality of offering an itinerary that directs students to the labor market, where the school turns to suppress the labor demands of capitalism, but Hernandez (2019) describes that the objective of promoting rapid training of students in occupational activities was added in the NEM to enter qualified and cheap labor "without requiring financial resources and, still, to meet the interests of entrepreneurs, the law proposes solutions that prove that it really meets the logic of capital and not the interests of high school students" (HERNANDES, 2019, p. 8).

With this, the school leaves the locus of formation of the student to enter the productive sector, the systematized knowledge will be abandoned to teach the practical experiences of the work environment. This aspect can cause inequality among high school students, especially if this training is offered in an unequal and segmented way.

In many cases, schools that offer technical training may end up receiving fewer resources and investments than schools that offer a traditional academic background. This can create a divide among students, where some have access to quality technical training, while others are deprived of this opportunity.

In this path of producing inequalities, Law 13,415, in the provision of school content, stipulates that compliance with the curriculum in the poorest education systems can be accomplished with the use of distance learning. In this context, the practice of teaching-learning, in this model, becomes difficult, because the possibilities of activities that are commonly used in the classroom are reduced. This proposal, disguised as flexibility, preaches the ideology of students learning autonomously, valuing learning through research, but in fact frees the student from integrating part of the basic curriculum of high school as formal education, that is, directly with teachers at school (HERNANDES, 2019).

Thus, it is noted that the reform of High School is considered an agent producing inequalities in school education, mainly because it is based on a meritocratic and selective conception. For Hernandez (2019), the reform prioritizes technical and professional training, to the detriment of general and humanistic training, which can strengthen social and economic inequality in the country. In addition, curricular flexibility, one of the main proposals of the reform, can favor only students with more resources, who are better able to choose the subjects they wish to take.

#### **4 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The present work, in its development, addressed the reform of High School, presenting the main changes arising with the approval of Law No. 13,415/2017, as well as its main aspects and



divergences. Through qualitative bibliographic research with a narrative approach to literature, the initial objectives described in the project were partially met.

High School is one of the fundamental stages of basic education in Brazil and has undergone changes in recent years. With the NEM, a series of changes were established in the curricular structure and in the form of teaching. However, the scope demonstrated in the project, aligned with different ideological matrices, as well as the absence of more consistent financial mechanisms, make the applicability of the New High School unfeasible. Mistakes made They are a reflection of the absence of a more organic conduction, focused on a societal project that would found a political and cultural construction of the students.

It is evident in the current law the importance of ensuring that the technical training presented is updated and relevant to the needs of the labor market. Otherwise, students may end up receiving outdated training and struggle to get a job after completing high school. Another point to be considered is the need to ensure that students who opt for technical training are not stigmatized or seen as "inferior" in relation to students who opt for traditional academic training. It is necessary to respect all forms of knowledge and ensure that all students have the same opportunities to succeed in their careers.

The idea that education should be focused exclusively on the labor market is worrisome. While it is important for students to develop practical skills that can be applied in their future careers, it is equally essential that they learn to think critically and to have a sense of citizenship. The approach of competencies and skills can lead to a superficiality in learning. Instead of focusing on fundamental concepts and theories, students are taught to handle practical situations quickly and efficiently. While this can be helpful in some situations, it can lead to a lack of depth and understanding.

The flexibilization of the curriculum and the possibility of choice of formative itineraries by students can result in a natural selection of the most qualified and motivated students for the areas most valued by the market, leaving the most vulnerable students with fewer opportunities. In addition, it can intensify school segregation, resulting in schools with more homogeneous and less inclusive profiles. Students who already have socioeconomic advantages may have more opportunities to develop these skills than students from less privileged backgrounds. This can perpetuate inequalities that already exist in society.

Given this, it is important to investigate the relationship between the reform of high school and educational equity to develop educational policies that guarantee all students access to quality training and reduce educational inequalities in Brazil. Education should not be seen as a means to an end, but as an end in itself.



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