

Reproducing success? Applying lessons in education reform to Campos dos Goytacazes

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In 2022, the education system in Campos dos Goytacazes (Campos), a municipality of 500,000 inhabitants located in Brazil's Rio de Janeiro state, was in need of reform. The city was prosperous, but its relative wealth had not translated into success in the Education Development Index (IDEB), Brazil's unified system for educational results. The municipality's 2017 IDEB results placed it in the bottom 15% of the state; then, in the next round two years later, Campos received no score at all after missing the registration deadline.¹ Participation in the IDEB was compulsory and this failure could compromise federal transfers, as well as limiting the information available to the new administration entering office in 2021.²

In this administration was Marcelo Feres, Campos's new secretary of education, science and technology. Originally from Campos, Feres had been away for many years, working in the federal Ministry of Education in the capital, Brasília.³ His return to municipal education in January 2021 coincided with a particularly challenging moment in Brazilian education: the COVID-19 pandemic had led to prolonged school closures which experts believed would set children's learning outcomes back by years.⁴ But Feres believed the pandemic also offered an opportunity to reform Campos's struggling education system, and in a few years' time, he wanted to be able to look back at this moment as a turning point.⁵

Feres turned to other Brazilian cities for inspiration, among them Sobral, a municipality being presented in education policy circles as an exemplar of reform.⁶ Sobral's education reforms had resulted in the biggest increase in IDEB scores in the country between 2005 and 2017 (see [Exhibit 1](#)).⁷ But the path had involved some politically difficult decisions, especially early in the process.⁸ Among the first decisions taken was a reorganisation of the school network which had involved closing a number of small schools, and consolidating students in fewer, but larger, schools instead. The change allowed the city to provide single-grade classes and better facilities, and also helped undercut the control of schools by local political leaders, opening the way for more meritocratic recruitment.⁹

Feres knew he would not be able to replicate Sobral's reforms exactly in the Campos context (see [Exhibit 2](#) for a comparison). However, he believed restructuring the physical network, including closing some schools with low student demand and 'in dialogue with local communities', might be useful.¹⁰ Like Sobral, Campos had many small schools with multi-grade classrooms. Reorganisation, Feres believed, would allow the municipality to establish more hours of schooling, improve conditions and help professionalise management, as it had in Sobral.¹¹ In February 2022, just at the start of the school year, Feres and his team announced the first step in their reorganisation plan: the closure of seven small day care centres and the transfer of the children to other units, if necessary, with the help of school buses.¹²

Meanwhile, a list of 20 schools being considered for closure had been leaked to the teachers' union.¹³ The story was covered by the local press and the decision was swiftly, and strongly, denounced by opposition councillors in the city legislature, as well as by the union and some parent groups.¹⁴ At the same time, the state Ministério Público (MP; the public prosecutor's office) started an inquiry to confirm the legality of the proposed closures.¹⁵

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In light of the growing political storm, Feres needed to decide whether to go ahead with the closures or reassess his strategy to improve Campos's schools.

Campos dos Goytacazes

Campos was the largest municipality in Rio de Janeiro in terms of area and the sixth biggest in the entire country.¹⁶ But with half a million inhabitants, Campos had a population density considerably lower than the state average.¹⁷

The municipality was also among the wealthiest in Brazil thanks to oil production in the Campos Basin, which had long generated substantial resources for the municipality by way of royalties.¹⁸ Although the percentage of revenue coming from oil-related income had decreased slightly from the high of 25% in the early 2010s, oil income remained very important to municipal finances.¹⁹ The municipality had among the highest revenues in Rio de Janeiro, itself one of Brazil's richest regions.²⁰ Campos was also in the top third of municipalities in Brazil in terms of the Municipal Human Development Index (IDHM).²¹ But as was common in Brazil, the municipality's high score was depressed by the education variable, which was considerably lower than the other variables of longevity and income.²²

Municipal education

In Brazil, the three levels of government – federal, state, and municipal^a – shared responsibility for the provision of education.²³ Although some regional variation existed, early childhood and primary education were typically provided by municipal governments, secondary education by state governments, and tertiary education by the federal government (see **Exhibit 3**).²⁴ The federal government was also responsible for funding and distributing resources.²⁵ Within this system of shared responsibility, local autonomy in education policy remained an important principle, and states and municipalities were allowed, within federal guidelines, to decide upon a wide variety of matters such as teaching methods, hiring, and setting curricula.²⁶

By the 2020s, Campos had 436 basic education schools (that is, all education up to the end of secondary education), of which 289 were municipal schools and day care centres, serving around 54,000 students.²⁷ Given its oil wealth, Campos was less reliant on federal transfers than most municipalities, and its per capita expenditure on basic education was relatively high.²⁸

But while Campos had high education spending and served as a hub for higher education in the state, its basic education system was one of the state's worst performing.²⁹ Brazilian education generally performed poorly in international comparisons, despite increasing access since the 1990s.³⁰ According to domestic testing, in 2017, only 61% of Brazilian students in the fifth year of schooling were at the 'adequate' level in Portuguese, and just 48% in mathematics.³¹ Yet these figures were better than the corresponding statistics in Campos of 51% and 33%, respectively.³² In 2015, the municipality had reached a high of 5.0 (out of a possible 10) on the IDEB, which combined test scores on maths and Portuguese with school progression rates.³³ But the scores had soon dropped again to 4.6 in 2017, placing it 79 out of 88 municipalities in the state.³⁴ Then, in 2019, the city failed to register for the assessments and was given no result (see **Exhibit 1**).

Despite the need for change, education reform in Campos had been slow. In 2009, the city had drafted a Municipal Education Plan in line with federal requirements, but few of the programmes were implemented.³⁵ The late 2010s saw some minor reforms in Campos, such as an end to automatic advancement from primary to secondary school, an increased focus on Portuguese and mathematics, and the implementation of elections for school principals (which was intended to reduce the importance of political connections in recruitment).³⁶

^a Unusually among federations, Brazilian municipalities were not created by the states nor were they governed by them; instead, municipalities had the status of federal entities, the same as the states.

However, some observers believed that improving education policy was still not a political priority in the city.³⁷

The new mayor

Brazil held municipal elections in November 2020. In Campos, Wladimir Garotinho, son of former mayors Rosinha and Anthony Garotinho, was elected. The municipality's politics had long been dominated by the Garotinho family. Both Rosinha and Anthony were former state governors and former mayors of Campos. Rosinha's mayoral term had only ended in 2016 when Rafael Diniz, a Garotinho opponent, was elected.

Wladimir Garotinho's election in 2020 thus marked the family's return to power. The elections had been close, though, with Garotinho winning by just five percentage points.³⁸ As part of his new administration, Garotinho appointed Marcelo Feres as secretary of education, but Feres knew the administration would be constrained by the municipality's polarised politics.³⁹

Marcelo Feres

Feres had been working as a professor of information technology at the Instituto Federal in Brasília when he was asked to return to Campos as the secretary of education.⁴⁰ He had a PhD in education and extensive experience in the field. From 2008 to 2016, Feres had worked at the federal Ministry of Education, where, as secretary of vocational and technological education, he had overseen the implementation of major programmes.⁴¹ But while Feres had long been involved in the areas of technical and professional education, he felt that he still had a lot to learn about basic education: 'In the national realm, I had had a different role which didn't take me to education's "shop floor,"' he reflected.⁴²

Feres accepted the role in Campos, but with one condition: he insisted on being free to make decisions based on policy concerns instead of responding to short-term political pressures.⁴³ Feres believed his academic and professional experience counted for little if he was not willing to take on challenges such as leading education reform in his hometown.⁴⁴

Secretary of Education

On his arrival, Feres found a well-experienced but often unmotivated team. He reflected that unlike in his stint in education management at the federal level, the structure of the municipal secretariat was inefficient and stuck in slow, bureaucratic and analogue processes. 'It felt like I was back in the 1990s,' Feres commented.⁴⁵

Beyond the secretariat, the system was facing some major challenges. With its large territory and low population density, Campos had a diffuse system characterised by many small schools. Often the schools held multi-grade classes in dilapidated buildings without adequate facilities.⁴⁶ These schools were usually isolated, both geographically and from the reach of the secretariat, and there was no vision of a school 'network' as such.⁴⁷ And with teachers spread across many schools, providing 'full-time education' – defined as a school day of seven hours or more – was difficult.⁴⁸ Most schools in Campos, as in many Brazilian regions, offered less than full-time hours, despite evidence from experts that full-time schooling increased language and maths proficiency considerably.⁴⁹

Other issues also existed, such as the political appointment of school principals, which had continued despite the introduction of elections, and the low motivation of some teachers.⁵⁰ Feres felt the administration had low credibility with both teachers and parents; he believed reversing this trend would be crucial to making lasting change to the education system.⁵¹ On the other hand, Feres felt his long-term experience in education helped his reputation with key stakeholders, allowing him some room to be a little daring with his policies.⁵²

Feres also had to consider the context of the pandemic. The health crisis had come at a difficult time for education in Brazil. At the federal level, education policy had been marred by a series of controversies since President Jair Bolsonaro came to power in January 2019. Civil society and political leaders from across the spectrum accused the education ministry of inefficiency, poor leadership, and driving ideology.⁵³ When the pandemic hit, local governments were largely left to decide their own responses.⁵⁴ Across the country, including in Campos, schools closed in March 2020, and remained shut for the whole school year.⁵⁵ But with limited support for remote learning, students suffered considerable learning losses.⁵⁶

When Feres entered office, school closures were ongoing, though some hybrid learning was set to start for the coming 2021 school year.⁵⁷ But, even though the pandemic was extremely disruptive to education, Feres also saw it as an opportunity.⁵⁸ He believed the pandemic had shifted the conversation surrounding the educational challenges facing Campos in particular, to issues outside his control and ones shared by all municipalities, giving him time to focus on a longer-term plan to reform Campos's education system.⁵⁹

Early changes

In early 2021, soon after Feres took office, the municipality launched the Efficient Learning Program (PAE).⁶⁰ The plan aimed to move Campos into the state's top 40 municipalities for education quality in primary education by 2024, and to ensure the change was sustainable. Another goal was literacy among all children before eight years of age and digital literacy by the fifth year of basic education.⁶¹

Feres tried to establish dialogue and transparency, and he sought opportunities to present his ideas to stakeholders. Although the pandemic was ongoing and Feres was swamped with work, he held meetings with 200 school principals and created a permanent managing committee with 14 principals to help guide decision-making. Feres wanted to empower these principals and break with what he saw as a false, 'top-down' notion that the secretariat created policy, while the school merely executed it.⁶² Then, in July 2021, Feres started the 'Education Hour' vlog, where he spoke about the PAE and talked to his counterparts in other cities, such as neighbouring Macaé and Itaperuna.

Feres was keen to look to other municipalities for inspiration. In addition to these neighbouring cities, he also spoke to secretaries at state capitals Salvador and Florianópolis. But one Brazilian municipality in particular was being held up as a model for education reform in the country – Sobral – and Feres was eager to speak to their education team.⁶³

Sobral, an education 'phenomenon'⁶⁴

Sobral, a municipality in the north-eastern state of Ceará, had a population of 212,000 people in 2021, the fifth largest in the state.⁶⁵ It had a GDP per capita of just over US\$4,000 – fairly high for the state, but far below the national average of around US\$6,500 and less than half Campos's US\$10,600.⁶⁶ Nonetheless, Sobral held a similar ranking to Campos in the Municipal Human Development Index (IDHM), but with a higher education variable.⁶⁷ (Refer to **Exhibit 2** for further comparisons.)

Sobral had started to draw attention in education circles when it jumped from 1,366th place in the first IDEB in 2005 to first place in 2017.⁶⁸ IDEB scores in Sobral even exceeded the average of São Paulo private schools, where some of the most privileged Brazilians were educated.⁶⁹ The change was deemed especially noteworthy as Sobral was not considered wealthy.⁷⁰ Although the education budget in Sobral almost tripled in real terms between 2001 and 2015, a period of high growth for the Brazilian economy and a time in which the federal government was overhauling education transfers, the expenditure per student of US\$1,340 in Sobral in 2015 remained significantly below the Brazilian average of US\$2,184.⁷¹ Other municipalities with far

greater funds, such as Campos, which had over US\$3,000 per student in 2011, performed considerably worse.⁷² If Sobral could do it, observers questioned, surely anywhere could?

Sobral's steps to success

When researchers began looking into Sobral's successful educational results, they identified a crucial period that began in the mid-1990s with the election of Cid Gomes (see **Exhibit 4** for a timeline of key reforms). At the time, the state of Ceará had decided to fully devolve to the municipalities the provision of primary and lower secondary education. This change led to an almost doubling of student enrolment in the Sobral municipal network (from 9,000 to 17,000), a network that was already struggling.⁷³

A study found that, at the time, over 80% of students in the municipal network had more than a year's delay in school.⁷⁴ Many teachers had been hired without meeting technical criteria, and the municipality offered no teacher training.⁷⁵ The school network was also highly dispersed. Many schools were in poor condition and had low enrolment.⁷⁶ The 40 smallest schools served just 4.4% of students.⁷⁷

The large number of schools created patronage opportunities for local politicians.⁷⁸ Political appointment of school principals was common in Brazil, where less than 10% of appointments involved any selection process.⁷⁹ In Sobral, few school principals were appointed meritocratically and reports emerged that some principals were illiterate.⁸⁰ These school principals had limited autonomy, for example needing the secretariat to approve and release funds even for small, regular expenses (e.g., water bills), and thus creating a 'beggar's culture' at the secretariat where principals asked for funds from whomever was currently in charge.⁸¹

It was into this setting, in 1996, that Sobral elected a new mayor, Cid Gomes. He won an unusually large margin of 25,000 votes (or 38 percentage points) over the runner-up – a typical victory was closer to 2,000 votes – and he had a strong majority in the city council (16 out of 17 representatives).⁸² Gomes believed that education was key to developing the city; as he said, 'Education was always a priority, the problem was getting to power.'⁸³

The reforms begin

One of the first steps the Gomes administration took to reform the education system was to reorganise the network and reduce the number of schools by nearly a third.⁸⁴ As a result of these changes, some children had to start to take school buses – up to 30km from their homes – and parents pushed back.⁸⁵ Aware that they had to 'tread carefully' in face of parent opposition, the mayor met personally with parents and explained the rationale: reducing the number of schools would allow the city to eliminate multi-grade classes and allocate resources more efficiently, he told them.⁸⁶ These exchanges were not always friendly: one father insisted that his child would not take the bus even if it meant missing school, claiming that he himself had lived well enough without education.⁸⁷ The administration threatened to send the police to arrest him if his child was not allowed to go to school.⁸⁸ But elsewhere concessions were made to keep some school buildings open as 'annexes' of larger schools that would serve the older children while pre-school children remained at the annexes.⁸⁹ At the same time, and as part of the strategy to contain the backlash, Gomes focused on improving visible aspects of education that would appeal directly to parents, such as improving uniforms, school meals, and buses, and beginning renovations on 31 schools.⁹⁰

Sobral was able to pay for these reforms with the help of the newly created Fundef, a federal education funding programme that involved fiscal transfers to poor municipalities on the basis of enrolment numbers.⁹¹ The transfers were conditional on the existence of (1) a monitoring and oversight body, which Sobral created, and (2) a teacher career plan, intended to professionalise the teaching staff.⁹²

The consolidation of students into fewer schools allowed for fewer teachers and fewer principals. That year, the administration laid off one-third of teachers in the network, those who had not been hired through regularised and meritocratic processes.⁹³ The lay-offs were opposed by the union, but as the Gomes administration was able to show that those dismissed had been hired illegally, the dismissals went ahead, freeing up a large amount of resources.⁹⁴

Meanwhile, the administration developed new systems for hiring. For teachers, a new career plan was created, in line with Fundef requirements, and with a competitive selection process, including the new requirement of a pedagogical degree.⁹⁵ Regarding the recruitment of new principals, the administration realised that it would be hard to find people with the right training. Instead, they hoped to identify those who could grow into the job because they had commitment, openness and capacity for dialogue and learning. The recruitment process comprised five stages over six months, and involved turning away individuals that had strong political backing.⁹⁶ The opposition was rattled, given the disruption to the patronage system, while critics claimed Gomes would never be elected again, not even for council.⁹⁷

A turning point

Despite these predictions, in 2000, Gomes was re-elected with an even greater share of the votes.⁹⁸ Facing a constitutional limit of two terms, Gomes knew he needed to continue to focus on education in his second term. He began by ordering an external assessment of education results in Sobral. The results were shocking: 40% of the students in grade 3 could not read a simple word.⁹⁹ The administrative measures and infrastructure improvements of his first term had not been enough to improve learning. In the face of the results, the administration had to choose between sweeping it under the rug or revealing the failure.

Mayor Gomes chose the latter option and went to the local radio to share the results, and Sobral's secretary of education visited schools to talk to parents. Some parents gave positive feedback, on improved facilities for example, but the secretary challenged them: 'the schools are beautiful... [but] your children are not learning anything. We will do our part, but you will have to do yours – bring them to school every day, every day and at the right time.'¹⁰⁰ The result was an increase in parent buy-in and motivation, according to Anna Penido, director of the Lemann Centre, an institution for educational leadership based in Sobral.¹⁰¹

The administration then brought in a wave of changes to the education system (see **Exhibit 4**) structured around the goal of achieving literacy for all children by the end of grade 2.¹⁰² It was, according to Penido, difficult for the administration to decide so firmly on a priority as they were aware other challenges facing the network might become neglected if the literacy efforts absorbed too much attention and resources.¹⁰³ But the team hoped that clear prioritisation would align efforts within the system and they believed literacy was the foundation to all learning. 'If they can't read and write, students can't follow the rest of the content; so the administration decided to take care of literacy first,' Penido commented.¹⁰⁴

To achieve the literacy goal, the government created new assessments to categorise children by literacy status and introduced remedial literacy classes for children falling behind.¹⁰⁵ Teachers were provided training on literacy and given non-mandatory lesson plans for literacy classes.¹⁰⁶ Meanwhile, primary schooling was extended to start at six rather than seven years old, and to reduce absences, schools started to record attendance rates and call parents of children who did not show up on the day of the absence.¹⁰⁷

Progress towards literacy goals were closely monitored in the new system, with learning targets established for each school.¹⁰⁸ Setting measurable objectives like this was uncommon in Brazilian education, often leading to push back from teachers who valued autonomy over what they saw as excessive managerialism and the introduction of private practices into public services.¹⁰⁹ Every two weeks, in the new system, a team from the education secretariat visited the schools and met with principals to analyse results, school absences, and other

issues.¹¹⁰ The administration also implemented a new culture of classroom observation whereby teachers' performance in everything from time management to school attendance strategies was recorded and feedback provided.¹¹¹ New teachers also now had a two-year probationary period, and underperformers could be dismissed.¹¹²

New monitoring and accountability measures were complemented with more autonomy and benefits. Teachers were now paid for up to four hours a week for lesson planning and training, and the administration established a new 'School Literacy Prize', a monetary reward for teachers and principals in schools that performed best against their literacy goals.¹¹³ Principals were also offered support from the secretariat on managerial and pedagogical challenges and were given autonomy over spending (with some exceptions, e.g. salaries) through the creation of a new fund.¹¹⁴ Transfers from the fund were largely based on student numbers, but 30% was tied to performance against selected criteria.¹¹⁵ Commenters noted that the new autonomy for school leadership was only possible given the removal of unqualified principals.¹¹⁶ The change also freed up time at the secretariat, which principals were told they could no longer visit to seek funds.¹¹⁷

Most of these reforms were in place by 2001, and Gomes and his successors in the mayoral office built upon and expanded them throughout the 2000s (see **Exhibit 4**). In 2002, the government introduced a salary top-up of 30% for teachers working in literacy classes to draw the best teachers to high-impact classrooms.¹¹⁸ Four years later, the city established a new teacher training school, which provided monthly training sessions for every teacher.¹¹⁹ Meanwhile, assessments were expanded to include Portuguese and maths, along with associated performance prizes, and in 2009 a new Municipal Learning Assessment unit was created to administer all tests for the municipality.¹²⁰ In the 2010s, many of these strategies, including frequent assessments and school prizes, were extended to lower secondary and early childhood education. The municipality also began work on new curricula to be implemented throughout Sobral.¹²¹

The city's education outcomes improved quickly. In 2004, three years after establishing the goal of literacy for all by second grade, 91% of students in that level were able to read and write with ease.¹²² And, according to Penido, when parents started to see their children reading fluently, parent buy-in and motivation really took off.¹²³ Soon the education system became a source of pride among student families,¹²⁴ and absenteeism was virtually eliminated.¹²⁵ By 2009, the municipality was starting to climb up the rankings of the IDEB rapidly. Experts reflected that there was no silver bullet that explained Sobral's success but noted that Sobral was able to implement a coherent package in a well-sequenced manner, improving on it over time. 'The beauty of Sobral is that they do the obvious things very well,' said Priscila Cruz, director of NGO All for Education.¹²⁶ In addition, observers pointed out that strong political commitment to reform played a key role in Sobral's success.

Political continuity

As of 2022, the Gomes family (and their allies) had been in power in Sobral for 25 years. Cid Gomes was elected mayor from 1997-2005; his brother Ivo Gomes was secretary of education since the beginning of his second term in 2001. The next three mayoral elections were won by close Gomes allies before, in 2017, Ivo Gomes became mayor.

The state of Ceará had also experienced remarkable political continuity and influence from the Gomes family during the period of education reform. Ciro Gomes, a third Gomes brother, was state governor in the early 1990s; at the time, polling found he was the most popular governor in Brazil.¹²⁷ After leaving the mayoral office in Sobral, Cid Gomes went on to govern the state between 2007 and 2015.¹²⁸ During this period, Cid Gomes and his secretary of education Izolda Cela scaled up aspects of the Sobral education model to Ceará, which despite being the fifth poorest state in the country experienced the greatest increase in IDEB scores over the period.¹²⁹

The Gomes family's power helped sustain progress in education reform. Not only did the successive administrations allow for policy continuity, but it helped protect their reforms from other powerful institutions. Public managers in Brazil, for example, often complained of interference by control bodies, notably the Ministério Público (MP). The MP, an organ independent of the judiciary, executive or legislative, had among its legal attributes the oversight of public bodies' actions.¹³⁰ However, there was broad criticism that its high levels of autonomy and discretion, combined with low accountability, led to overreach on policy, paralysation of processes, and poorer outcomes.¹³¹ But in Sobral, the Gomes family's political networks reportedly ensured some protection from the control bodies.¹³²

Such reports often claimed that the Gomes family were oligarchs or represented an updated version of 'coronelismo', a set of practices dating to the early 19th century which were based on a mix of coercion and clientelism.¹³³ Critics reported instances of voters being threatened with having water turned off unless they voted the Gomes ticket and of the family installing supporters to influential positions.¹³⁴ Gomes defenders, in contrast, disputed charges of coronelismo or oligarchy, and argued that the Gomes family performed well due to their popular policies; they maintained that the Gomes family did not dominate the economy nor the media, and had always faced a strong opposition.¹³⁵

A reference for education systems in Brazil and beyond

The success of Sobral attracted attention from across the media, government, academia and the third sector.¹³⁶ Interest skyrocketed after Sobral reached first place in the IDEB, bringing an influx of visitors. Many felt like Tabata Amaral, a well-known federal deputy who interned at the Sobral education secretariat in 2014: 'a day did not go by without me thinking that what I was watching [in Sobral] was what needed to happen in every public school in Brazil.'¹³⁷ The Lemann Foundation, one of the largest education-focused philanthropic organisations in the country, created a new centre aimed at training educational leaders located in, and inspired by, Sobral.¹³⁸ Eventually, to meet demand, city hall started concentrating all visits into workshops at the end of every month.¹³⁹

Advocates hoped the visitors could take what they learned in Sobral and adapt it to their own contexts. But many leaders found the task challenging in practice. In the view of one education specialist, the problem was that many visitors, amazed at the more visible features of reform, failed to understand the key processes going on in the background.¹⁴⁰ Thus, while articles covering Sobral frequently commented on the students' salutations to visitors and the nice facilities,¹⁴¹ education specialists such as Raquel Coelho were often more impressed with how well established the processes were within the public administration.¹⁴² Similarly, some leaders struggled to adapt the reforms to their own political contexts. For example, mayors who visited Sobral often emphasised their own difficulty in disrupting the tradition of political appointments in school management, as well as in ensuring policy continuity in municipalities that, unlike Sobral, underwent frequent changes of government.¹⁴³

Criticisms and COVID-19

By the late 2010s, the Sobral model, under intense scrutiny, started to face some criticism. The most serious of the allegations emerged in 2018 with reports that students in Sobral were pressured to defraud tests in order to get their schools better results.¹⁴⁴ According to these reports, which were apparently based on extensive (though anonymised) interviews with parents and employees, schools would ask certain students to take tests in the name of poorer-performing students.¹⁴⁵ The city vehemently denied the allegations, arguing that they were politically motivated, timed to damage the presidential election campaign of *Ciro Gomes*, and claiming that even if isolated incidents had occurred, they would not have the power to affect overall results.¹⁴⁶ The federal body responsible for administering the external tests said it had never received any complaints and there were procedures to ensure the validity of results.¹⁴⁷ Beyond the anonymised interviews, no other evidence was produced.

The scandal did lay bare a broader concern with the Sobral model. Some critics believed that the 'obsession' with tests, rather than more holistic learning, incentivised the city to focus too much on preparing for assessments on Portuguese and maths, to the detriment of science, humanities, social skills, and critical thinking.¹⁴⁸ Some critics noted that, as tests approached, other classes were cancelled so students could focus on the subjects being assessed, sometimes for the entire school year.¹⁴⁹ More broadly, opponents believed the frequent use of chants, repetition, and call-and-response techniques in Sobral ran contrary to principles of 'active learning' promoted by pedagogy experts.¹⁵⁰

Nonetheless, even critics conceded that Sobral was aware of these issues and had been trying to tackle them. The city had started a long process of modernising its curricula, which were finally published in early 2020, and introduced psychologists to the classroom to support socio-emotional aspects of education.¹⁵¹ The municipality was also continuing to top assessments of education quality, and the population at large now saw Sobral as a hub for education: Sobral's municipal network was attracting people from other cities and even drew students from the private schools back to public education, a rare feat in Brazil.¹⁵²

In 2020, however, fresh concerns arose with the educational challenges of the pandemic. When schools closed, Sobral did not immediately offer remote learning, focusing instead on maintaining students' bonds with school.¹⁵³ In Ceará, only 60% of students in the public system had access to the internet and many of those did not have the necessary equipment or had to share, posing technical challenges.¹⁵⁴ A new study in 2022 showed that children from Sobral who were taught to read by remote learning had a performance equivalent to what would be expected from pupils from one grade below pre-pandemic.¹⁵⁵ As one educator in Sobral put it, 'We tried very hard... but it was impossible to get through this period without damage.'¹⁵⁶

Both pupils and teachers returned to the classroom from September 2021. Extra shifts were added to reinforce teaching, increasing the number of hours children spent in school, as well as psychological support for students.¹⁵⁷ And given their history of success in turning around education, the government was certain they could make up the learning losses quickly.¹⁵⁸

Meanwhile, other cities had to face the challenges of the pandemic – and without the benefit of Sobral's previous academic achievements. One such municipality was Campos, and Feres was keen to learn from examples of success.

Lessons for Campos

In July 2021, Feres met virtually with the education team of Sobral.¹⁵⁹ Feres knew that taking reforms developed elsewhere and trying to make them work in his own context would not be easy. 'We can't simply implement actions from the outside, but the concepts and public policy questions may be similar. We are looking for best practices that can adhere to our reality,' thought Feres.¹⁶⁰

Feres recognised that Campos faced some similar challenges to those in Sobral: current issues concerning access to education during the pandemic, but also challenges Sobral had tackled in the past, such as a dispersed school network and low parent buy-in.¹⁶¹ Yet, other factors were quite different, notably the political landscape, as City Hall in Sobral held significantly more sway than its counterpart in Campos.

Campos also had a distinct challenge: principals were elected by the local community, but engagement in the process was low and district leaders ended up having the *de facto* power to appoint principals.¹⁶² In December 2021, the city had passed a law restricting eligibility to stand in the election process to education professionals or those already in the post, hoping to increase the chance that education specialists would be appointed.¹⁶³ And instead of the simple-majority votes used before, the law gave equal weighting to the internal community (teachers and staff) and the external community (parents of children enrolled in the school).

Feres saw this as a step forward towards the long-term goal of making principals accountable to communities instead of local politicians.¹⁶⁴

Frequently in his first year, Feres found that he had to make trade-offs between achieving things quickly and making sure policies were sustainably working towards his long-term goals.¹⁶⁵ For example, given the infrastructure problems facing Campos's school system, Feres was under pressure to get renovations started quickly so that children could return to schools with adequate facilities.¹⁶⁶ But after an investigation, Feres believed the companies contracted to make renovations were responsible for many maintenance issues in the first place.¹⁶⁷ Rather than approve the renovations in the face of political pressure, Feres instead decided to start a new bidding process, significantly delaying maintenance and angering many who wanted to see renovations underway.¹⁶⁸

Yet some of Feres's other actions had been well-received, such as improving the distribution of school lunches.¹⁶⁹ Additionally, in September 2021, Feres announced plans for new Chromebooks for teachers and a new partnership with Sobral to create a Municipal Educator Training School.¹⁷⁰ By early 2022, after a year in the post, Feres felt that he was earning the trust of key actors in the education system and that the tone of responses on social media to his work had improved remarkably.¹⁷¹ The permanent managing committee that he had initially established with 14 school principals had grown to 35 members; they had developed bonds of solidarity and helped him conduct his responsibilities with open dialogue.¹⁷² (See **Exhibit 5** for a timeline of reforms in Campos.)

But, looking at the reforms he wanted to achieve, Feres knew that soon he would have to make some more difficult decisions.

A controversial reorganisation

In February 2022, Feres shifted his focus to the reorganisation of the school network, just in time for the return to in-person schooling for all municipal-network students for the first time since March 2020. Feres had identified the expansion of full-time schooling as one of his priorities, but to do so, he reflected, 'we will need fewer schools in our network, because at this stage it is stretched too thin.'¹⁷³ Not only would consolidating the network into fewer, larger schools allow Campos to offer more students more school hours in single-grade classes, it would hopefully have the added benefits enjoyed in Sobral of improving management and allowing for better maintenance, equipment and facilities.¹⁷⁴

Feres knew school closures were politically risky, even if all children were still guaranteed a place.¹⁷⁵ Memories were fresh of an incident in 2015, when the state government of São Paulo announced measures to close 94 schools.¹⁷⁶ The changes meant that some parents who had had multiple children enrolled in one school would need to start dropping them off at different schools, though the government promised they would not be more than a mile apart.¹⁷⁷ The reorganisation triggered a wave of massive protests and school occupations which lasted for weeks, leading to the plan's demise and the resignation of the education secretary.¹⁷⁸

To make matters more fraught, Campos was facing a turbulent political moment. On 15 February, elections for president of the city council were held and a member of the opposition won by a single vote in a session marked by pushing and shoving between different factions.¹⁷⁹ The next day, after formal complaints by two of his fellow councilmen alleging breaches of the internal rules governing the election, the current president, an ally of the mayor, announced the suspension of the results.¹⁸⁰ A week later, the election was annulled, and the opposition started boycotting the sessions to avoid quorum, thus creating a legislative deadlock.¹⁸¹

With this backdrop, and despite knowing the closures would be controversial, Feres began his restructuring. He planned to close seven small day care centres.¹⁸² The centres facing closure were all small, with 11 to 50 students each.¹⁸³ Several were reported to be in 'terrible structural

condition', some in rented buildings, and some even in adapted homes that did not meet regulations.¹⁸⁴ The children would instead be sent to other, undersubscribed day care centres with good facilities and adequate conditions.¹⁸⁵ For some of the children, this would mean transferring to other day care centres just metres away from their current buildings; but for those moving further afield, City Hall guaranteed transport to minimise the disruption to parents.¹⁸⁶

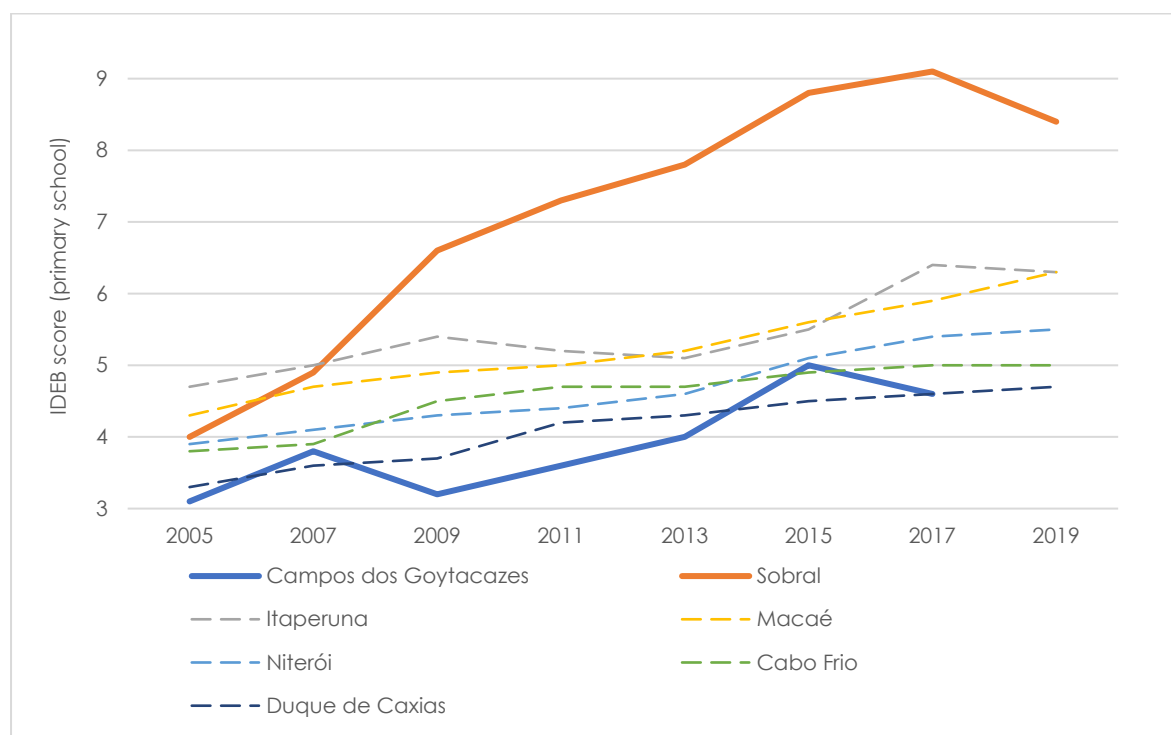
However, the announcement was met with protests from several corners, notably the union, Sepe. Union officials claimed to have received a list of 20 schools in study for closure, about a tenth of the network, which had been leaked, likely by somebody from within Feres's office.¹⁸⁷ The union was fundamentally opposed to the closures. In addition to questioning the impact on educational professionals, the union repudiated the secretariat's claim that the new schools were in any better condition than those being closed.¹⁸⁸ Furthermore, the director of the Campos branch of Sepe argued: 'it is a right of the child to have a school close to their residence, and it changes the entire logistics for [families] ... Closing schools is a crime. You don't do that.'¹⁸⁹ The union threatened protests against the school closures, but also for higher pay and better benefits.¹⁹⁰

Some parents and carers promised to join the demonstrations. One grandmother in charge of her grandson's childcare told journalists, 'We are going to do our best to keep this day care centre from closing because we depend a lot on it, especially me, because it's close to my house, it's [on the way] for me to go to work.'¹⁹¹ Other parents approached the city's 'Guardianship Council', an autonomous body intended to ensure compliance with the rights of children and adolescents, to express their concerns, particularly over the transport of small children and infants to the new centres.¹⁹² Parent groups, especially in areas where the children would now need to take buses, began mobilising against the closures.¹⁹³

These parent groups were heard by the Rio de Janeiro state unit of the MP, which had launched an investigation into the closures. The MP claimed that the closures were a 'step backwards' that could be illegal if they did not follow strictly objective criteria.¹⁹⁴ Though these kinds of statements were common and there was no immediate legal repercussion, pressure was mounting on Feres.¹⁹⁵

Feres defended the plans. 'Everything is being done in a planned manner and with a focus on improving quality of education... The measure leads to more security and quality... and rationalization of public resources,' said the secretariat in a statement.¹⁹⁶ 'These measures follow a model similar to other cities in the country... and all students enrolled in schools involved in the project to restructure the network will benefit from quality teaching in full time.'¹⁹⁷ But, with teacher protests on the horizon and parents organising on social media, Feres needed to weigh his options. Should he reconsider the importance of school closures at this stage? Were there other ways to achieve his goal of improving education in Campos?

Exhibit 1 IDEB scores in Sobral, Campos, and other peer municipalities



Note: Data is from primary school IDEB assessments. Peer municipalities were those used in comparisons by the Campos secretary of education as 'municipalities considered regional hubs with more than 100 thousand inhabitants' in Rio de Janeiro state.

Source: Compiled by case writers from 'Índice de Desenvolvimento da Educação Básica [Basic Education Development Index (Google Translate, 2022)]', IBGE, <https://cidades.ibge.gov.br/brasil/rj/campos-dos-goytacazes/pesquisa/40/30277?ano=2019&localidade1=330070&localidade2=330170>, accessed September 2022; 'Conheça o Programa PAE [Discover the PAE Program (Google Translate, 2022)]', PAE Portal, <https://www.pae-seduct-campos.com/programa-pae>, accessed July 2022.

Exhibit 2 Selected information comparing Campos and Sobral, 2021

	Campos	Sobral
Schools and day care centres in municipal network	289	67
Students enrolled in municipal network	51,628	31,689
Average number of students per school	179	472
Teachers in municipal network	2,817	1,378
Average number of teachers per school	10	21
Average number of students per teacher	18	23
Total population (2021 estimates)	514,643	212,437
GDP per capita (US\$, 2019)	14,550	5,563
IDHM (2010)	0.716	0.714

Source: Compiled by case writers from National Institute of Educational Studies and Research, 'Microdados do Censo Escolar da Educação Básica 2021 [Microdata from the 2021 Basic Education School Census (Google Translate, 2022)]', Inep, <https://www.gov.br/inep/pt-br/aceso-a-informacao/dados-abertos/microdados/cento-escolar>, accessed September 2022; 'Censo escolar - sinopse [School census – synopsis (Google Translate, 2022)]', IBGE, <https://cidades.ibge.gov.br/brasil/ce/sobral/pesquisa/13/78117>, accessed September 2022; 'Sobral', IBGE, <https://cidades.ibge.gov.br/brasil/ce/sobral/panorama>, accessed September 2022; 'Campos dos Goytacazes', IBGE, <https://cidades.ibge.gov.br/brasil/rj/campos-dos-goytacazes/panorama>, accessed September 2022.

Exhibit 3 The structure of Brazil's education system

Starting age	Administrative unit (primary responsibility)	Grade/Year		Education programme		
23+	Federal government and states	Higher education		Doctoral degree		
22				Academic master's degree	Professional master's degree	Specific professional diploma
18				Bachelor's degree	Licentiate's degree	Technological degree
						Technical course
15	States	Basic education	Grade 3	Upper secondary education		
			Grade 2			
			Grade 1			
11	Municipalities and states		Year 9	Lower secondary education		
			Year 8			
			Year 7			
			Year 6			
6	Municipalities and states		Year 5	Primary education		
			Year 4			
		Year 3				
		Year 2				
		Year 1				
4	Municipalities		Pre-school			
0			Early childhood educational development			

Source: Compiled by case writers from OECD, *Education in Brazil: An International Perspective* (OECD Publishing: Paris, 2021), available online at <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/c61f9bfb-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/c61f9bfb-en>; and 'Brazil's Constitution of 1988 with Amendments through 2017', translated by Keith S Rosenn, Constitute Project, https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Brazil_2017.pdf?lang=en, accessed December 2021.

Exhibit 4 Timeline of selected moments and education reforms in Sobral by theme (1997-2017)

Political events	Reform themes				
	Pedagogy and assessments	Network structure	School management	Teacher training and motivation	Parental buy-in
1997 Cid Gomes's first term as mayor of Sobral begins		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reorganisation of the school network, closing down certain schools, ending multi-grade classes • Investments to improve infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New meritocratic process created for the selection of school principals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dismissal of teachers hired without meeting technical criteria (about 1/3 of all teachers) • Teacher career plan established • New selection process created for recruitment with new technical criteria i.e., a pedagogical degree 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted improvements to appeal directly to parents, e.g., uniforms, buildings, meals, and transport • Meetings with parents to explain rationale for less popular changes
2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First literacy assessment for primary education students 				
2001 Cid Gomes's second term as mayor of Sobral begins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy for all students by grade 2 established as goal • New pedagogy structured around literacy established • Oral learning evaluations conducted by external consultants • Students categorised by literacy status for more targeted work with lower literacy level students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion of primary school to start at 6 years old (becomes national policy in 2006) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of new fund allowing schools' autonomy in spending (excluding salaries and textbooks) • Learning targets for schools established • School Literacy Prize established – monetary reward to principals if the school achieves literacy goals • Unit established to provide management and pedagogical support to school leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Literacy Prize established – monetary reward to teachers if the school achieves literacy goals • Recruitment wave for new teachers • Training provided for literacy teachers • Introduction of non-mandatory structured lesson plans • Introduction of classroom observations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings with parents and local press interviews to discuss illiteracy and poor education • Monitoring of school attendance with parents involved on the day of absence • School learning goals discussed regularly with parents
2002				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30% wage increase for teachers working in literacy classes 	
2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of written assessment of literacy and Portuguese/maths assessment for grades 3-5, conducted by external consultants 				
2005 Leônidas Cristino (a Gomes ally) starts first term as mayor of Sobral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipality takes over the design and administration of evaluations, ending reliance on external consultants 				
2006				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of Municipal Teacher Training School 	
2007				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prize for schools restructured to include evaluations of Portuguese and maths 	

Reproducing success? Applying lessons in education reform to Campos dos Goytacazes

	Pedagogy and assessments	Network structure	School management	Teacher training and motivation	Parental buy-in
2009 Leônidas Cristino starts second term as mayor of Sobral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of Municipal Learning Assessment unit to administer all municipal evaluations 				
2011 Leônidas Cristino leaves office to become a federal minister; Vice-Mayor Veveu Arruda (another Gomes ally) becomes mayor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pedagogical strategies expanded to lower secondary education Consolidation of learning evaluations for primary and secondary education as well as early childhood education 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prize for schools expanded to include early childhood and lower secondary education 	
2013 Veveu Arruda starts second term as mayor of Sobral					
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of municipal curricula for Portuguese and maths 				
2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New curricula implemented 				
2017 Ivo Gomes starts first term as mayor of Sobral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curricula expanded to cover sciences 				

Source: Compiled by case writers from Louise Cruz and Andre Loureiro, 'Achieving World-Class Education in Adverse Socioeconomic Conditions: The Case of Sobral in Brazil', World Bank report (2020), <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/34150>, accessed August 2022; and Todos pela Educação, 'Educação Que Da Certo: O caso de Sobral (CE) [Education That Works: The case of Sobral (CE) (Google Translate, 2022)]', (October 2021), <https://educacaoquedacerto.todospelaeducacao.org.br/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/educacaoquedacerto-todospelaeducacao-sobral-digital.pdf>, accessed August 2022; Ilona Becskéhazy, 'Sobressaltos ou fortuna: As idas e vindas para tentar tirar a educação da idade das cavernas emu ma terra desolada [Shocks or fortune: The comings and goings of trying to get the education out of the cave age in a desolate land (Google Translate, 2022)]', Casos de Políticas Públicas, <https://casosdepoliticaspublicas.com.br/casos-de-ensino/>, accessed August 2022.

Exhibit 5 Selected moments and education reforms in Campos by theme, 2021

Political events	Reform themes				
	Pedagogy and assessments	Network structure and facilities	School management	Teacher training and motivation	Parental buy-in
2021 Marcelo Feres becomes Secretary of Education in Campos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literacy for all students by 8 years old and digital literacy by Grade 5 established as a goal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to maintenance company contracts to increase accountability before school renovations begin Cross-network sharing of best practices and challenges started 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings with school principals and creation of a permanent managing committee to advise on policy Changes to principal election rules to give less weight to political connections and more to parents and staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plans for new Municipal Educator Training School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of vlog to increase community access to information about education and policy Targeted improvements to appeal directly to parents, e.g., uniforms and meals

Source: Compiled by case writers.

Notes

- ¹ Matheus Berriel, 'Campos cai 31 posições e é 79º em ranking do Ideb no estado [Campos drops 31 positions and is 79th in Ideb ranking in the state (Google Translate, 2022)]', *Folha 1* (03 September 2018), <https://www.folha1.com.br/conteudo/2018/09/geral/1238283-campos-cai-31-posicoes-e-e-79-em-ranking-do-ideb-no-estado.html>, accessed August 2022; 'IDEB – Campos dos Goytacazes', IBGE, <https://cidades.ibge.gov.br/brasil/rj/campos-dos-goytacazes/pesquisa/40/0?tipo=grafico&indicador=78188&localidade1=231290&localidade2=420820>, accessed July 2022; Gisele Maria Viana Martins, et al., 'Análise do IDEB e do IDHM – educação em Campos dos Goytacazes (RJ) [IDEB and IDHM analysis – education in Campos dos Goytacazes (RJ) (Google Translate, 2022)]', *Revista Tecnologia e Sociedade*, vol. 17, no. 47 (2021), <https://periodicos.uffpr.edu.br/rt/article/view/12629>, accessed July 2022.
- ² Marcos Pędłowski, 'O que é preciso para ser prefeita ou prefeito de Campos dos Goytacazes? [What does it take to be mayor of Campos dos Goytacazes? (Google Translate, 2022)]', Blog do Pedłowski (15 October 2020), <https://blogdopedłowski.com/tag/ideb/>, accessed July 2022.
- ³ 'Professor do IFF em Campos, RJ, é nomeado a cargo em Brasília [Professor at the IFF in Campos, RJ, is appointed to the post in Brasília (Google Translate, 2022)]', *Globo G1* (16 April 2015), <https://g1.globo.com/rj/norte-fluminense/noticia/2015/04/professor-do-iff-em-campos-rj-e-nomeado-cargo-em-brasilia.html>, accessed August 2022.
- ⁴ 'Mortality Analyses', Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center, <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/data/mortality>, accessed August 2022; Harry A Patrinos et al., 'COVID-19 school closures fueled big learning losses, especially for the disadvantaged', World Bank Blogs – Let's Talk Development (16 May 2022), <https://blogs.worldbank.org/developmenttalk/covid-19-school-closures-fueled-big-learning-losses-especially-disadvantaged>, accessed August 2022.
- ⁵ Marcelo Feres, interview with case writers, 26 July 2022.
- ⁶ See, for example, 'The State of Ceara and the City of Sobral, in Brazil, are Role Models for Reducing Learning Poverty', The World Bank Publication News (07 July 2020), <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/brazil/publication/state-ceara-brazil-role-model-reducing-learning-poverty>, accessed August 2022.
- ⁷ Andrew Loureiro et al., 'There is no magic: The formula for Brazil's Ceará and Sobral success to reduce learning poverty', World Bank Blogs – Education for Global Development (09 July 2020), <https://blogs.worldbank.org/education/there-no-magic-formula-brazils-ceara-and-sobral-success-reduce-learning-poverty>, accessed August 2022.
- ⁸ Louisee Cruz and Andre Loureiro, 'Achieving World-Class Education in Adverse Socioeconomic Conditions: The Case of Sobral in Brazil', World Bank report (2020), <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/34150>, accessed August 2022.
- ⁹ Ibid.; Todos pela Educação, 'Educação Que Dá Certo: O caso de Sobral (CE) [Education That Works: The case of Sobral (CE) (Google Translate, 2022)]', (October 2021), <https://educacaoquedacerto.todospelaeducacao.org.br/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/educacaoquedacerto-todospelaeducacao-sobral-digital.pdf>, accessed August 2022.
- ¹⁰ Marcelo Feres, interview with case writers, 26 July 2022.
- ¹¹ Ibid.
- ¹² Dora Paula Paes, 'Campos fecha sete escolas a Sepe trata questão como crime [Campos closes seven schools and Sepe treats the issue as a crime (Google Translate, 2022)]', *Folha 1* (24 February 2022), <https://www.folha1.com.br/geral/2022/02/1280203-campos-fecha-sete-escolas-e-sepe-trata-questao-como-crime.html>, accessed August 2022.
- ¹³ Ibid.
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- ¹⁵ 'Ministério Público instaura inquérito para averiguar fechamento de unidades escolares municipais em Campos [Public Prosecutor launches investigation to investigate closure of municipal school units in Campos (Google Translate, 2022)]', *Terceira Via* (24 February 2022), <https://www.jornalterceiravia.com.br/2022/02/24/ministerio-publico-instaura-um-inquerito-para-averiguar-fechamento-de-unidades-escolares-municipais/>, accessed August 2022.
- ¹⁶ Martins, et al., 'Análise do IDEB e do IDHM [IDEB and IDHM analysis]'; 'Campos, RJ, completa 181 anos e história é contada em exposição [Campos, RJ, turns 181 and history is told in exhibition (Google Translate, 2022)]', *Globo G1* (28 March 2016), <https://g1.globo.com/rj/norte-fluminense/noticia/2016/03/campos-rj-completa-181-anos-e-historia-e-contada-em-exposicao.html>, accessed August 2022.
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- ¹⁹ Marcelo da Silva Machado, 'Cidades ricas, educação nem tanto [Rich cities, education not so much]', *Fineduca*, vol. 3, no. 8 (2013), <https://seer.ufgrs.br/index.php/fineduca/article/view/58389/34960>, accessed July 2022;

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²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Martins, et al., 'Análise do IDEB e do IDHM [IDEB and IDHM analysis]'.

²² Ibid.

²³ Cruz and Loureiro, 'Achieving World-Class Education in Adverse Socioeconomic Conditions'.

²⁴ Ibid.; Aaron Pierce, 'Decentralization and Social Policy in Brazil: An Analysis of Health and Education Policies of the New Republic', *Journal of International Affairs* (23 Apr 2013), <https://jia.sipa.columbia.edu/online-articles/decentralization-and-social-policy-brazil-analysis-health-and-education-policies-new>, accessed November 2021.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Marina Avelar and Stephen J Ball, 'Mapping new philanthropy and the heterarchical state: The Mobilization for the National Learning Standards in Brazil', *International Journal of Educational Development*, vol. 64 (2019), pp. 65-73.

²⁷ National Institute of Educational Studies and Research, 'Microdados do Censo Escolar da Educação Básica 2021 [Microdata from the 2021 Basic Education School Census (Google Translate, 2022)]', Inep,

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³⁷ Freitas, 'Rafael Diniz fala sobre propostas para a Prefeitura de Campos, no RJ [Rafael Diniz talks about proposals for the Campos City Hall, in RJ]'; Viviane Cristina Silva Lima, 'Os (des)caminhos da Educação do Campo em Campos dos Goytacazes: uma análise das políticas públicas educacionais [The (non) paths of Rural Education in Campos dos Goytacazes: an analysis of public educational policies (Google Translate, 2022)]', *Diversitas Journal*, vol. 6, no. 1 (Jan/Mar 2021), pp. 1620-1637, https://diversitasjournal.com.br/diversitas_journal/article/view/1575/1332, accessed July 2022; Matheus Berriel, 'Campos cai 31 posições e é 79º em ranking do Ideb no estado [Campos drops 31 positions and is 79th in Ideb ranking in the state (Google Translate, 2022)]', *Folha 1* (03 September 2018), <https://www.folha1.com.br/conteudo/2018/09/geral/1238283-campos-cai-31-posicoes-e-e-79-em-ranking-do-ideb-no-estado.html>, accessed July 2022.

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