EDUCATION

QUICK GUIDE TO PUBLIC POLICIES

RIO DE JANEIRO

V.1
A LEAP IN EDUCATION QUALITY

Rio de Janeiro is pioneering a reform in public sector education, making the city’s schools a source of pride for Cariocas (Rio residents). Classroom practices and methods for managing resources and people that have been implemented since 2009 have resulted in unprecedented progress in the level of learning in the largest network of municipal schools in Brazil. The leap in education quality is reflected in the scores achieved in the Basic Education Development Index (known by the Portuguese acronym IDEB), which in 2011 improved quality within the final years (6th to 9th grade) by 22 per cent and by 6 per cent within the initial years (1st to 5th grade). In 2013, the IDEB confirmed this progress, with the municipal school network maintaining an overall average score of 5.3 within the initial years and 4.4 within the final years.

The work of improving teaching in Rio’s municipal schools began by breaking down the harmful paradigm for students. In January 2009, the current city administration put an end to automatic school grade promotion – which permitted automatic progression through the grades as a solution to the high failure rate, without evaluating the most important thing: learning. Alongside this change, a comprehensive system for reinforcing basic literacy was established, in addition to the School Reinforcement Program, which has significantly reduced functional illiteracy and eliminated discrepancies in children’s ages in each grade.

The municipal government established a basic curriculum for all schools from the 1st to 9th grade, thereby guaranteeing that the same content is applied to all students equally. By 2016, the municipal school network will have 35 per cent of its students studying full-time, based on a single seven-hour timetable, with more classes in Portuguese, Mathematics and Science. By 2014, 20 per cent of the school network already had this system, bringing about benefits for teaching and expanding students’ horizons. To enable this change, schools are being built, resized and renovated.

Education policy in the municipality of Rio is aimed at the city’s future, with targets considering changes up to 2030. The reorganization of the school network has established a clear system for teaching stages, which can now be monitored precisely. From the start of the current city government administration until 2016, around R$3.7 billion will have been invested in constructing and renovating school facilities. Over an eight-year period, the Municipal Education Secretariat will have opened 95 new schools and 206 Early Childhood Development Spaces (known by the Portuguese acronym EDI), which combine nursery care with the learning needed for the first phase of life in high-quality facilities. The city government has doubled the number of places offered at nurseries over the course of five years.

Efficient education management has resulted in major benefits for students and the city. As of 2014, the municipality’s 1,450 teaching facilities served 660,000 students, enrolled from nursery to 9th grade of basic education (encompassing elementary and middle school, prior to high school). Improving education also means transforming the lives and future of thousands of families.

During the current administration, 23,000 new teachers have been hired in five years, eliminating the deficit of 7,500 professionals in the teaching network. The Positions and Salaries Plan and the Paulo Freire Teacher Training School enable educators to dedicate themselves fully to students, a commitment to continuous improvement in quality. Rio’s municipal schoolteachers have the highest teaching salaries among all Brazilian state capitals for university-educated teachers working on a 40-hour-per-week basis.

The leap in quality reflected in school performance ratings, the policies developed and the production of tailored content make the city of Rio an example to be followed by a series of other municipalities that are using Rio’s experience to find a path to high-quality education for the population. By educating its children and young people better and properly valuing its teachers, Rio is providing a lesson for Brazil.
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To achieve the desired results in Cariocas’ education, Rio city government launched an ambitious project to reorganize its entire teaching network in 2009. Facilities are being revamped in line with children’s and teenagers’ three cycles of development, with extended hours.

Early Childhood Development Spaces (known by the Portuguese acronym EDI) are aimed at the beginnings of education, with a nursery and preschool. After this come elementary schools, starting with 1st grade and progressively being extended to 6th grade (previously included in the second segment of education), following the example of a change adopted in the countries that have progressed most in education in recent decades. This change ensures a smooth transition for 6th-grade students to the next stage of their education.

Thus, 11/12-year-old students gain an extra year to adapt and are kept at school with the same teacher for all subjects, ensuring closer monitoring. The last segment of basic education takes place in middle schools (called “ginásios”), for 7th to 9th-grade students. After that point, state-level schools are responsible for students’ education.

This restructuring of cycles and schools is designed to favor the application of a specific curriculum for different age ranges and provide more study time for basic subjects. In this way, teachers can specialize more in line with students’ learning stages in each phase of their life. School managers can also monitor results with a more precise focus on the segments and facilities in each region of the city.

In 2013, the team that coordinates the program completed a detailed study of the city’s regions, which resulted in the city being broken down into 232 micro-regions. Each one of these micro-regions will now have an appropriate number of EDIs, elementary schools and middle schools, allowing families to choose a school in their neighborhood. School building and renovation work is creating the facilities needed to strengthen a single timetable model from 1st to 9th grade.
BREAKDOWN OF CYCLES AND DIAGRAM OF UNITS

BASIC STRUCTURE – TEACHING MODEL

PERMANENT

SINGLE CURRICULUM
EXERCISE BOOKS
TESTS EVERY TWO MONTHS
EXTERNAL ASSESSMENTS
SCHOOL REINFORCEMENT WORK
ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING OF NEW STUDENTS

TEMPORARY

Correction of flow – Literacy reinforcement
Correction of flow

Organization of units by segment and with SEVEN-HOUR or PART-TIME TIMETABLE

EDI
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
MIDDLE SCHOOL

EDI
EDI
EDI

nursery and preschool + EE
1st to 6th grade + EE
7th to 9th grade + EE + youth and adult education

Basic Curriculum for All Schools

To deliver high-quality education to the people of the municipality of Rio, the current administration implemented a basic curriculum for all subjects from 1st to 9th grade in 2009, involving work by municipal teachers and a specialist consultancy. As a result, all students, regardless of the school where they are enrolled, learn the same content and are assessed according to the same criteria.

Teachers in the first and second segments now have clarity regarding the subjects and themes to be worked on in the classroom. Curricular guidelines are organized into two-month periods, while monitoring by the Municipal Education Secretariat guarantees that school principals, teachers and coordinators gain periodic feedback on the progress of their classes’ performance.

Unified tests in Portuguese, Mathematics, Science and Writing, taken every two months, allow parents, students, teachers and managers to precisely identify students’ progress and areas for attention. Learning is tested through external assessments to guarantee that the students at Rio’s municipal schools have access to the most advanced and consistent solutions in basic education.
The Municipal Education Secretariat, aided by specialist consultants, has developed a series of exercise books providing content in all basic education subjects. The teachers are given these exercise books, which they may use at their discretion, in addition to textbooks. The vast majority of teachers choose to use the exercise books, which were specially developed for the municipal teaching network, due to their quality and modern lesson format. All of this material is also provided to the students free of charge.

This initiative in Rio has inspired many other municipal governments across Brazil to seek guidance for the development of content. Rio city government has authorized other municipalities to reproduce this copyrighted material, sharing knowledge and contributing to the global progress of education.

At the start of the new municipal administration in 2009, 28,000 4th to 6th-grade students were identified as functionally illiterate. Across the municipal teaching network, more than 30 per cent of students needed extra help in at least one subject. To enable this group of students to progress with their studies, the current administration set up the School Reinforcement Program, involving intensive work to reteach them how to read and write.

In this way, the city government began to make up for lost time. Little by little, functional illiteracy in the municipal teaching network has been eliminated, and the children are able to go back into classes with other students close to their age, improving their self-esteem and social adaptation to the school environment.

From 2009 to 2013, nearly 38,000 students were retaught how to read and write. The functional illiteracy rate fell from 13.6 per cent in 2009 to 3.1 per cent in 2013, comfortably beating the target to reduce to under 5 per cent by 2016. The reinforcement classes allowed 60,500 students to return to classes with other students of roughly their age between 2010 and 2013.

The tests that take place every two months and the external assessments periodically indicate which students or classes need to join the School Reinforcement Program. This monitoring ensures that it is possible to maintain students’ progress and continuous improvement in teaching.

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<td>2009</td>
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Valuing Teachers

Rio city government knows how important teachers are in improving the quality of teaching and it seeks to increase their value. As a result, the teachers in Rio’s municipal education network have the highest salaries among all Brazilian state capitals. In 2014, the starting salary for a fully qualified teacher working for 40 hours per week was raised to R$4,410.31. Benefits such as transport vouchers, meals and cultural bonuses raise this figure to more than R$4,900.

23,363 new teachers have been hired over the five-year period since 2009. By 2014, the municipal teaching network had a total of 42,529 educators in classrooms. The current administration has managed to eliminate the preexisting deficit of 7,500 teachers. In addition, all teachers hired through public contests have been employed to work for 40 hours per week since 2011.

To help educators continually develop their skills, the Paulo Freire Teacher Training School was established in 2012. By carrying out continuing education through in-person, semi-distance and distance courses, municipal teachers expand their horizons and stay abreast of teaching practices and new content discussed in Brazil and around the world. Among the courses offered, there is one for new teachers, which prepares professionals entering the municipal school network and complements their adaptation to work in the classroom. The teachers on this course are also overseen by a tutor.

Through the Annual MA and PhD Scholarship Program, the Paulo Freire Teacher Training School encourages teachers to develop themselves further. The institution’s facilities provide access to the Anísio Teixeira Library and Public Education Center of Reference (known by the Portuguese acronym CREP), which support research and provide historical references regarding public education in Rio de Janeiro.

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Target to create 60,000 nursery and preschool places by 2016
Rio’s municipal education network gives Rio’s families a guaranteed commitment to education from the very first years of life. Early Childhood Development Spaces (known by the Portuguese acronym EDI) bring together nursery and preschool facilities in a space equipped with high-quality materials. Via this format, infants receive essential learning stimulation in line with their development.

In rooms prepared to receive children from six months up to 5 years and 11 months of age, specialist early childhood teachers introduce children to the school environment. The concept behind the EDIs considers the need to prepare human beings for learning from their earliest moments, building the base for their entire intellectual life. Early childhood education is therefore a part of the cycle of constant improvements that makes Rio de Janeiro a pioneering city in the transformation of education in Brazil.

Between 2009 and 2014, 27,632 nursery places were created, practically doubling total enrolment in the municipal teaching network, which now serves 67,000 children in this age group. The city government’s target is to create 60,000 nursery and preschool places in all between 2009 and 2016.
In Early Childhood Development Spaces (known by the Portuguese acronym EDI), children are presented with appropriate books, content and materials for their first steps in education. The educators at these facilities are trained to care and teach so as to guarantee that, while parents are working, their children are served by specialist professionals. More than 3,000 teachers have so far been hired to work at EDIs, and the number of new EDIs and places at them is being expanded continuously.

By 2014, 201 Early Childhood Development Spaces were already operating, of which 129 were fully built. Communities with Pacifying Police Units (UPPs) have received 49 EDIs, catering to 9,000 children. By 2016, an additional 66 new EDIs will have been established.
By 2014, 129 new EDIs had been built, bringing the total up to 201.
**EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

67,000 children served*

27,632 places created

*In municipal government nurseries, Early Childhood Development Spaces (EDIs) and nurseries covered by agreements.
By reorganizing its teaching network, the city government has managed to improve students’ basic education performance. One of the steps taken has been the inclusion of 6th grade in the first segment of education. After analyzing results, the teaching network’s structure and students in difficulty, the current administration initiated a measure that has proved successful in countries recognized for the quality of their education: keeping 6th grade – corresponding to students aged 11/12 years old – in the first segment of education.

This change in the segment’s structure avoids the school transition from occurring during a life phase in which pre-adolescents are going through major transformations. By keeping 6th grade in first segment schools, students continue to have just one teacher for the different subjects, rather than many teachers, with techniques and practices that require students to have the capacity for adaptation.

Implemented initially in a set of 53 experimental classes in 2011, the new system was shown to be highly efficient, resulting in a sharp fall in the 6th grade failure rate and test scores 50 per cent higher than in the other classes that received the same content. In 2014, the format was rolled out to 330 classes, and the assessments have attested to enhanced performance.

By developing a single curriculum and customized teaching materials, and by monitoring the results, with tests every two months and external assessments, the first segment schools in the city of Rio have reached a new level of performance. The municipality was ranked fourth across the whole of Brazil in the 2011 Basic Education Development Index (known by the Portuguese acronym IDEB), with an average score of 5.4 – 6 per cent up from the previous exam.
Experimental 6th grade classes attained scores 50 per cent higher than the regular classes.
The reorganization of the teaching network now offers second segment students a school model appropriate for the type of learning demanded by young people. An improvement in students’ performance in the second segment in Rio’s municipal education network was identified in the 2011 Basic Education Development Index (IDEB): the municipality came fifth in the final years (6th - 9th grade) with a score of 4.4 – up 22 per cent from the 2009 IDEB score of 3.6, which put the city in ninth place.
Ginásio Carioca Middle Schools

The Ginásio Carioca is a school model that provides 7th to 9th grade students with teaching underpinned by three main principles: academic excellence; support for students’ life plans; and education based on values for life in society. The schools are designed to promote wide-ranging development of youth leadership within suitable physical facilities and with well-prepared professionals.

Initiated in 2011, the Ginásio Carioca program has also established sport-oriented Olympic middle schools (Ginásios Olímpicos) and vocational middle schools focused on specific areas of knowledge. As of 2014, 24 regular middle schools and three Olympic middle schools were operating.
Vocational Middle Schools

Students in Rio’s municipal teaching network who are identified as having an affinity for specific areas of knowledge and distinct skills are assigned to vocational middle schools, where they find support and facilities to discover and develop their talents. Three schools of this type are operating in 2014.

At the Visual Arts Middle School, opened in 2013 in the city’s port region, students with a strong aptitude for and interest in the world of art receive support to work on this type of vocation. Located in Praça Mauá, within Vicente Lícinio Cardoso Municipal School, this school is integrated with the Rio Museum of Art (known by the Portuguese acronym MAR), a space of excellence for contact with the arts.

The Visual Arts Middle School’s students have seven periods dedicated to artistic activities per week. The school has 262 students, who specialize in workshops encompassing the following subjects: drawing, painting, color, figures (representation of the human figure, animals and landscapes), weaving, 3D, graphic arts, media (cinema, photography and digital tools) and intervention (dance, theater and the performing arts).

Dedicated to music, the Samba Middle School operates within the Chile Municipal School, in the neighborhood of Ramos, in Rio’s North Zone. Every week, six periods are dedicated to specific activities, such as percussion, string instruments, keyboards, wind instruments, singing classes and workshops to develop musical creativity.

Developed in partnership with companies in the sector, the New Educational Technologies Middle School is a prototype for the schools of the future. Located within André Urani Municipal School in Rocinha, one of Brazil’s largest favelas (shantytowns), this middle school is innovative in its methods and management. The classes and grades are not fixed and the school materials include tablets and smartphones. The students develop their specific skills by using Educopédia, an online platform containing support material. A pioneering approach is also found in the school’s tests, applied using a Testing Machine that automatically marks tests and immediately shows the scores.
Olympic Middle Schools

Education in the city of Rio has embraced sport, and it has already delivered, in the run-up to the 2016 Olympics, an important Olympic legacy for students in basic education and their families. The city’s Olympic middle schools promote athletic development among young people identified as talented in different sports. At the three schools now operating and at another three that are being prepared to open by 2016, the students’ learning is designed in line with the Olympic values and the development of sports skills.

One of the new schools will be dedicated to Paralympic sport, in an initiative aimed at creating opportunities for future athletes and promoting social inclusion for young people with disabilities.

At the Olympic middle schools, academic development is planned to incorporate two hours of sports practice and participation in competitions per day. Good academic grades are a prerequisite for students to maintain their training routine, thereby making sport a stimulation for learning. The schools’ students are selected through aptitude tests.

Operating since 2012, Juan Antonio Samaranch Olympic Middle School in the neighborhood of Santa Teresa has 525 students. The following year saw the opening of Dr. Sócrates Olympic Middle School in Pedra de Guaratiba and Félix Minelli Venerando Olympic Middle School in Caju, both designed for 350 students. The sports offered at these schools include athletics, table tennis, volleyball, handball, chess, swimming and wrestling.
The city of Rio has an institute specially dedicated to serving children and young people with special needs, such as disabilities, pervasive developmental disorder or exceptional gifts. Helena Antipoff Municipal Institute (known by the Portuguese acronym IHA) is a center of reference for knowledge production, development of methodologies and special teaching materials.

Around 12,000 students are monitored by IHA, which promotes both monitoring in regular classes and education at 10 specialist schools, as well as special classes. Preference is also given to students’ social inclusion and keeping them in regular classes, with a specialist educational service team conducting activities outside normal class hours in multifunctional resource rooms. Students with hearing disorders have access to sign language tools in regular classes, with interpreters who facilitate integration with the group.

The municipality’s 10 special education schools are equipped with adapted teaching materials. Students with special needs are entitled to free transportation between their home and school, in order to facilitate their family routine and prevent students from missing their school activities. IHA also maintains teams with Rio’s 11 regional education coordination units to track the students’ progress.

IHA is a Brazilian center of excellence in initial and continuing training for professionals involved in special education. In 2013, the institute trained 100 teachers in Digital Special Education for Students with Autism.
IHA closely monitors 12,000 students with special needs
Guaranteeing high-quality public education for a city of more than 6 million inhabitants requires a long-term view. In all areas of the city, the Municipal Education Secretariat promotes education as a way of enabling Cariocas to develop on an equal footing with students at the best schools in Brazil and across the world well into adult life.

The use of technology, concern for social inclusion and adaptation to the circumstances of Rio, transformed into a region of global interest with multiple opportunities, permeate all education policy in the municipality.

Programs such as Schools of Tomorrow, aimed at children living in vulnerable areas, and Rio Global Children, focused on teaching English, offer students extra opportunities to progress in their learning. Educopédia, a collaborative platform of digital classes, applies technology and neuroscience principles to reinforce learning.
Schools of Tomorrow

Promoting education for children and young people in vulnerable areas is the safest way to create a cycle of transformational development for the next generations, leading families to a new level of prosperity. The Schools of Tomorrow program was launched in 2009 to combat truancy and stimulate learning at 155 elementary schools in crime-prone areas of the city with identified high school dropout rates, poor attendance and students repeating years. People living in favelas not yet pacified by the police, for example, now have access to high-quality education.

Through this program, which also involves areas of health, social welfare, sport, art and culture, Rio’s city government has made schools a place for complete attention to students and their families. Full-time study and the holding of educational and cultural workshops outside school hours have progressively created greater interest in the school and its classroom activities. The students now have contact with computers and teaching practices involving the use of new technologies.

The work of the 4,200 teachers involved in the program has produced striking results. The Schools of Tomorrow’s Basic Education Development Index (IDEB) scoring for the final years (6th to 9th grade) increased by 33 per cent between 2009 and 2011, outperforming Rio’s municipal education network as a whole, which improved by 22 per cent. In the initial years (1st to 5th grade), the Schools of Tomorrow improved by 8.7 per cent, compared with 6 per cent for the municipal education network as a whole.

In another area of the program, between 2008 and 2011 there was a 37.6 per cent decline in truancy at the Schools of Tomorrow, compared with a fall of 11.1 per cent across the education network. The program has proved to be effective both at keeping children at school and in its capacity to promote significant learning gains among people most in need. The initiative’s positive impact goes beyond the students, transforming the lives of whole families in deprived areas.
By using digital tools, teachers and students in Rio’s municipal teaching network have the opportunity to find extra content in each subject, both inside and outside the classroom. Educopédia, developed and revised by the city’s municipal teachers, is an online collaborative platform with digital classes that accompany the subjects in each stage of the school year.

Educopédia offers videos, graphics, animations, images, texts, tests, games and podcasts that complement the content worked on in the classroom and stimulate students’ curiosity, encouraging them to go farther in search of knowledge.

The use of a wide range of tools, designed in line with metacognition theories (awareness raising of students using their own knowledge and capabilities) and neuroscience’s discoveries for education, expands students’ horizons.

Educopédia’s activities include class plans for all subjects, in line with the Municipal Education Secretariat’s curricular guidance. The program offers a quick and easy option for teachers who wish to integrate technologies into their classes. Subjects are broken down into 32 digital classes, which correspond to the weeks in the school year. The platform also has teacher training courses.

Teachers can employ Educopédia during classes or they can advise their students to explore it on their own.
Rio Global Children

The opportunities of a global city – the host of Brazil’s biggest events, such as the World Cup and Olympic Games – demand that its citizens are prepared to interact with different cultures and languages. The Rio Global Children program has engaged all schools in the municipal education network in an initiative to intensify the study of English, from 1st to 9th grades.

Created in 2010, the program has established a weekly English class for 1st to 3rd grade students, while students have two weekly classes between 4th and 9th grade. By 2014, the program had reached 500,000 students, helping them to compete for future job opportunities by teaching them a second language.

Rio’s city government has also implemented completely bilingual teaching at five municipal schools, strengthening the scope for specialization in teaching.
A high-priority goal for Rio’s city government, the creation of the Single Timetable program in the municipal teaching network is based on a restructuring of schools. To build the necessary facilities and adapt existing ones, the current administration created the Schools of Tomorrow Factory, a program for delivering a series of facilities needed to implement a single timetable regime for 35 per cent of the education network’s students by 2016.

The Schools of Tomorrow Factory was designed to develop modern education facilities using modular structures, with a shorter construction time and building work aligned with sustainability principles.

Around R$2.1 billion will be invested in this program by 2016, creating 136 new schools and adapting 77 existing ones. The first schools built by the program will be delivered in 2015.

The work to progressively arrive at a single timetable will include more classes in a system that permits more detailed monitoring and proximity between teachers and students, and that strengthens families’ ties with school life. As of 2014, the single timetable regime had reached 20 per cent of enrolled students. With a seven-hour timetable, municipal school students have more classes in Mathematics, Portuguese and Science – the foundation for progress in overall school performance.
The transformation of education in the municipality of Rio is leaving a legacy for public sector teaching across Brazil. The city has gone from a situation of risk – with a policy of automatic progress up to the next grade, disregarding students’ performance – to levels of excellence in many areas. The leap in quality is evident in the results of external assessments attesting to the current administration’s efficiency.

Average scores in the Basic Education Development Index (IDEB) among students in the initial grades (1st to 5th) of basic education rose from 5.1 in 2009 to 5.4 in 2011 – an increase of 5.9 per cent in just two years, putting the city in fourth place in the ranking of Brazilian state capitals. With around 300,000 students in this segment, Rio was only ranked behind municipalities with much smaller teaching networks, all with fewer than 90,000 enrolled students.

In the final years (6th to 9th grade), Rio’s average score rose by 22.2 per cent, from 3.6 in 2009 to 4.4 in 2011. The city came in fifth place in this segment, in which it has 230,000 students. Again, the top four positions were held by state capitals with small teaching networks, all with fewer than 60,000 enrolled students.

The 2013 IDEB showed the maintenance of average performance across Rio’s municipal education network: the city once more had an overall average score of 5.3 in the initial grades and 4.4 in the final years. This proves that the education policy and investments in teaching enhancements have had a lasting and sustainable impact.

The performance of Rio’s municipal schools, examined in detail, also reveals the power of seriously managed education inclusion. The 2011 IDEB recorded an even sharper improvement in deprived communities than in the rest of the network. In these regions, where the municipal administration has focused its efforts and resources since 2009, the improvement in 2011 was 8.3 per cent in the initial years in police pacified areas and 8.5 per cent at the Schools of Tomorrow in areas not yet pacified. In the final years, the
improvement was 38.7 per cent on average in pacified areas and 32.3 per cent in other communities with Schools of Tomorrow.

The adoption of a basic curriculum, the production of exercise books and work to universalize a single seven-hour timetable regime all make for a promising future for Rio’s families. The current administration tackled the challenges to reteach 38,000 students how to read and write and to get 60,500 students back into classes with other students of roughly their age – proof that, to obtain overall progress in education, you need to look at the whole city.

The teachers in the municipal education network are a priority for the current administration and stand out as key players in Rio’s leap toward excellence in teaching. By prioritizing a 40-hour-week regime, the municipal government is preparing the network for a paradigm shift capable of even more significant transformations, with the single seven-hour timetable and the change to keep 6th grade within the first segment of basic education.

The gains obtained from this change, which has already resulted in 50 per cent higher grades in the 378 classes that have until 2014 adopted this format, will soon be extended throughout the network, and it will serve as a model for other cities that use Rio as a benchmark for education management.

Through the use of technology, investment in extracurricular activities, the universalization of language teaching – already available to 500,000 children in the municipality – and investment to create paths for specific careers in the areas of technology, arts and sport, Rio’s municipal government is preparing its citizens for the future, helping to educate new Cariocas capable of understanding the world and contributing to the building of a fairer and more competitive country.
THE LARGEST MUNICIPAL EDUCATION NETWORK IN BRAZIL

1,450 facilities
660,000 students enrolled
45,529 teachers