

Executive summary

Mexico has taken important steps to improve the coverage and quality of its education system **and is moving from a system that is driven by inputs and numbers towards one based on quality of education, and more focused on student learning.** To progress further on this path, it is important for the Mexican education system to continue investing efforts in strengthening the delivery of basic education in its schools with the goal of improving student learning. This report presents an assessment of the country's education reforms in light of international evidence, remaining challenges and possible next steps to achieve the consolidation of a system that delivers educational improvement.

Mexico's recent education reform

Mexico has been undertaking important reforms that have achieved much progress in a relatively short period of time. From 2012-13, the Mexican government made a series of commitments to improve quality and equity in education. A constitutional reform in early 2013 and subsequent legislation have:

- Made quality education (*educación de calidad*) a right for all Mexicans by including it in the constitution.
- Made equity both a priority across the education system and a transversal principle in the new educational model and targeted programmes for specific population and indigenous groups.
- Introduced a new curricular reform based on the vision for the Mexican learner in the 21st century, to respond to learning needs for the century. The curriculum includes knowledge, skills, values and attitudes, taking into account well-being and socioemotional education, a balance that many education systems internationally are reflecting upon. The new reform also offers some degree of curricular autonomy.
- Focused on improving school environments for effective teaching and learning, upscaling full-time schools, defining minimum norms of operation for schools and a new school improvement support service (*Servicio de Asistencia Técnica a la Escuela*, SATE).
- Created a teacher professional service based on merit that includes teachers, principals, supervisors and pedagogical support figures, and that has competency-based profiles and standards, with a career structure that includes clear entry, permanence and promotion mechanisms for the teaching profession.
- Provided constitutional autonomy and responsibility to the National Institute for Education Evaluation (*Instituto Nacional para la Evaluación de la Educación*, INEE) over the national evaluation system of Mexico's compulsory education system in 2012. Part of this has been the design of evaluation and assessment

frameworks such as PLANEA (*Plan Nacional para la Evaluación de los Aprendizajes*, National Plan for Students' Learning Evaluations) that support schools and policymakers to ensure effective student learning and enhance the quality of education for all.

- Provided high levels of funding for the improvement of school infrastructure across the country, with a special focus on schools with the most pressing needs.

While progress has been made, many of these reforms need time to mature and flexibility to be adjusted as required to ensure schools deliver quality education for all students. This requires a balance between policy design and implementation on the ground. The OECD suggests four main priorities to move ahead in this process.

Reflection on future policy development

Priority 1: Providing equity with quality in Mexican education

Mexico has succeeded in a range of areas to enhance the opportunity to learn for all students. The legislation reform has introduced the issue of quality and equity in education as a priority for education services, and further policies have laid a strong basis to progress towards a better quality of its education services. Progress in equity has advanced on two fronts. In terms of system-level policies, Mexico has focused on expanding and improving enrolment in early childhood education and care (ECEC) and upper secondary education, aiming for transparency in overall funding; establishing basic conditions for all schools to comply with; and supporting the consolidation of all-day schools. In terms of targeted programmes, the New Educational Model (*Nuevo Modelo Educativo*, NME) introduced a Strategy for Equity and Inclusion in Education aiming to build a coherent approach to the different existing equity programmes. There has also been considerable investment in educational infrastructure across the country. Mexico should ensure that policy development in education continues advancing towards high-quality learning for all students in the future. In this respect, Mexico could:

- Introduce educational and school funding formulas so resources are distributed equitably between schools.
- Guarantee that disadvantaged schools attract and retain qualified education professionals.
- Monitor the coherence and impact of targeted programmes.
- Consolidate school infrastructure and continue with investment and maintenance of the physical environments.

Priority 2: Providing 21st century learning to all students

Overall, Mexico's curriculum reform design brings together the best international practices and aligns them with the vision the country set for its education system. The efforts to engage with stakeholders from diverse corners of the education system in a consultation to elaborate the curriculum are commendable and resulted in a high-quality curriculum, while the education authorities proved extremely skilful at managing large-scale projects such as the production of new instructional material on a tight schedule. From now on, education authorities in Mexico should focus their efforts on providing all the support necessary to accompany students, educators and school communities as well as authorities at the lower levels of government to take ownership of this new curriculum and implement it properly. In this regard, Mexico could:

- Prioritise investment in teachers' and school leaders' capacity to implement the new curriculum.
- Give schools the time and agency required for effective curriculum implementation.

Priority 3: Supporting teachers and schools

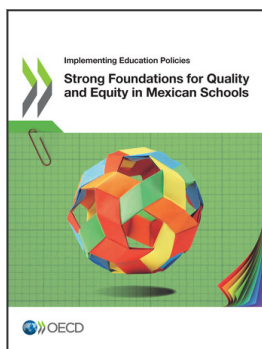
Mexico has made significant progress in producing mechanisms to support schools as learning communities and in implementing concrete efforts to introduce the Teacher Professional Service (*Servicio Profesional Docente*, SPD) that provides the system with transparency and reliability. The *La Escuela al Centro* (School at the Centre) strategy was created by the SEP to give coherence at the school level to Mexico's 2013 reform priorities and reorganise school support programmes accordingly. The SPD sets out the bases for selection, induction, promotion, incentives and tenure possibilities, as well as for stimulating continuous professional training for educational staff. Still, there are some areas in these domains that should improve substantially and require attention. In particular, Mexico could:

- Strengthen leadership and school-level collaboration to enact the School at the Centre strategy (*La Escuela al Centro*).
- Promote the career perspective of the Teacher Professional Service.
- Prioritise continuous professional development and the SATE to grow education professionals' quality.
- Keep adjusting the professional performance appraisal to deliver on both its formative and summative functions.

Priority 4: Focusing evaluation and assessment on schools and student learning

Mexico has made important progress in the consolidation of a comprehensive national system for educational assessment and evaluation. The INEE is now an autonomous body with the role of co-ordinating the national system of educational assessment and evaluation. This system should be seen as an essential piece to support quality and equity in education as mandated by Mexican law. In this regard, at an instrumental level, the three modalities of PLANEA (SEN, Schools and EDC) should be seen as a major step in making the assessment and evaluation system more formative. The actions undertaken by the INEE and the SEP to develop evaluation and assessment capacities at the subnational level are also commendable. To continue on this path, Mexico could:

- Ensure that all evaluation and assessment information (like PLANEA results and information contained in the SIRE) is used to improve policies and school practices.
- Use system evaluation to identify vulnerable student groups and inform policy instruments to support them.
- Invest more in evaluation and assessment capacity development at the state and school levels.
- Encourage the formative use of PLANEA results to improve school practice.
- Use the mechanisms for educational information and management to their full potential at the national, state and school levels.



From:
Strong Foundations for Quality and Equity in Mexican Schools

Access the complete publication at:
<https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264312548-en>

Please cite this chapter as:

OECD (2019), "Executive summary", in *Strong Foundations for Quality and Equity in Mexican Schools*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/459c91d8-en>

This work is published under the responsibility of the Secretary-General of the OECD. The opinions expressed and arguments employed herein do not necessarily reflect the official views of OECD member countries.

This document and any map included herein are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.

You can copy, download or print OECD content for your own use, and you can include excerpts from OECD publications, databases and multimedia products in your own documents, presentations, blogs, websites and teaching materials, provided that suitable acknowledgment of OECD as source and copyright owner is given. All requests for public or commercial use and translation rights should be submitted to rights@oecd.org. Requests for permission to photocopy portions of this material for public or commercial use shall be addressed directly to the Copyright Clearance Center (CCC) at info@copyright.com or the Centre français d'exploitation du droit de copie (CFC) at contact@cfcopies.com.