

## RETURN ON INVESTMENTS IN BASIC EDUCATION IN ALAGOAS IN HIGH SCHOOL (2022-2024)



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### ABSTRACT

The present study has as its theme the discussion of the return on investments made in secondary education during the time period from 2022 to 2024. As a justification for the choice of the theme, the relevance of discussing the implementation of affirmative actions that present the intention of reducing dropout and leveraging the teaching and learning process is highlighted. Among them, the School 10 Program and the Teacher Mentor Program stand out here. Thus, the general objective of this research is to discuss how the social feedback of the investment in basic education in high school in Alagoas takes place. To this end, it is emphasized that this study is descriptive and qualitative with a non-experimental approach and presents education as a field of study. In consonance, the examination then carried out is expressed as a bibliographic research since it has a national scope, mainly state, as the content in question is of full interest to Alagoas society; However, it can serve as an example for other Brazilian states. Therefore, issues such as salary disparities and different returns for educational institutions in the face of government investments, the entry into secondary and higher education for low-income students, the role of the teacher and the different returns on investments in education are discussed here. In these aspects, the results show that the salary disparity among teachers is a

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chronic problem in Brazil. In Alagoas, the starting salary of a teacher is R\$5,501.43, while in Mato Grosso do Sul it is R\$12,380.66 (data obtained in January 2025). Therefore, there is a very large discrepancy in the results that Alagoas has shown in the national ranking and the salary of teachers in this network. In other words, there is an inversely proportional magnitude in this dealing. However, the research concludes that government investments in basic education can have different jobs and returns. Factors such as participatory and empathetic management, infrastructure, teaching materials, and political will are also relevant for improving educational outcomes. Accordingly, the opportunity to enter high school and higher education is crucial for low-income students and it is with this perspective that the state of Alagoas invests in educational programs, such as encouraging the payment of a completion scholarship for students who take the National High School Exam (ENEM); However, it is worth noting that despite the investments made, it is necessary to promote new demonstrations such as the promotion of thermal comfort, the appreciation of education workers and the requirement of proof of learning development. In addition, the research also highlights the fundamental role of the teacher for the success of students and it is through this argument that investments in education boost the state's economy and reaffirm that education is the foundation for a more egalitarian, prosperous and just society. In summary, the research concludes that affirmative action programs can give a return on investment in education. The implementation of public policies aimed at education can prevent dropout, promote the teaching and learning process, stimulate social transformations, cultural changes and encourage individual and, consequently, collective growth. Such acts push for the uplift in the quality of life of individuals, especially those from Alagoas.

**Keywords:** Investments. Basic Education. Middle school.

## INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the main pillars of economic and social development in any region. In the state of Alagoas, education has been a constant challenge, with performance indicators below the national average according to data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, 2022). However, in recent years, the government of Alagoas has invested significantly in education, with the aim of improving the quality of teaching and increasing the completion rate of primary and secondary education (Secretaria de Educação de Alagoas, 2022).

According to studies, investment in education can generate significant returns in terms of economic growth and social development (Hanushek & Wößmann, 2015). In addition, education can also have a positive impact on reducing poverty and inequality (Todaro & Smith, 2015). In the context of Alagoas, it is essential to evaluate the return on investment in education in recent years, considering the performance indicators and the results achieved.

As Hanushek and Wößmann (2015, p.12) state, "education is a fundamental investment for the economic and social development of any country". In addition, Todaro and Smith (2015, p.15) highlight that "education is a fundamental human right and an essential component of sustainable development". In this sense, it is essential to evaluate the return on investment in education in Alagoas, to ensure that resources are used efficiently and effectively.

This article aims to analyze the return on investment in education in Alagoas from 2022 to 2024, considering the performance indicators and the results achieved. We will use data from the IBGE, the Ministry of Education (MEC), the Department of Education of Alagoas and other sources, to assess the impact of investment in education in the state. In addition, we will also discuss the political and social implications of the results, and present recommendations to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of investment in education in Alagoas.

## METHODOLOGY

The present research has as its theme the return on investments in education in Alagoas in high school (2022-2024) and aims to discuss how the return on investment in basic education in high school in Alagoas takes place. Such a study is descriptive and qualitative with a non-experimental approach, because according to Campbell and Stanley

(1963) "non-experimental research is one in which the researcher does not control the independent variables" and presents education as a field of study.

The examination carried out here is expressed as a bibliographic research, because for Lakatos and Marconi (2017) "bibliographic research is a type of research that uses written sources, such as books, articles and documents, to collect data and information"; In this way, a review of existing writings is reported. In time, it also has a national scope, mainly statewide, since the content in question is of full interest to Alagoas society.

As mentioned above, the research discusses some relevant points for the development of the theme that will deal with several nuances that comprise the salary disparities and different returns for educational institutions in the face of government investments. Another factor in emphasis is the opportunity for low-income students to enter high school and college. However, highlighting the role of the teacher, it will be discussed about the salary disparities, as well as the different returns on investments in education for this professional category.

In time, the debate will also be held on the additional factors that affect the return on educational investments. To this end, we exemplify with the examination of a specific case of the Monsenhor Luís Carlos de Oliveira State School, located in the municipality of Ibateguara, and also of the Professor Margarez Maria Santos Lacet State School, in Maceió, which also demands a discussion on the evolution of educational policies.

Finally, the results obtained will be discussed and the conclusions reached with the study will be explained. Regarding research procedures, Kerlinger (1979) states that "research procedures are the systematic and logical steps that the researcher follows to collect and analyze data". From this perspective, it is possible to point out that there will be no data collection; Thus, what is exposed here was obtained through a bibliographic research.

In accordance with the ethical aspects, it is possible to perceive that research must be impartial, objectivity, reliability, and veracity. In the meantime, research ethics is an ongoing commitment, which requires critical reflection and responsible action throughout the study process.

It should also be noted that the data obtained were taken from official educational platforms such as: Secretariats of Education, Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC), among others.

## **DIFFERENT PAY GAPS AND RETURNS**

A worrying element that has discouraged the new generations from entering undergraduate courses throughout Brazil is wage inequality. In addition, there is the physical and mental wear and tear that this profession demands. Added to this factor is the constant attention to students, parents, school management and inspection bodies to which teachers need to pay attention. Another aggravating factor in the country is the process of devaluation of the teaching profession through which the profession has passed. Teaching seems to be irrelevant and has been devalued in society.

Between 2022 and 2024, the differences in the salaries of high school teachers in Alagoas highlighted significant obstacles to the valorization of this category. In 2022, the national salary floor for teachers was set at R\$3,845.63, for 40 hours per week. However, several municipalities in Alagoas did not apply this amount, causing stagnation in teaching careers.

The then president of the Union of Education Workers of Alagoas (SINTEAL), Izael Ribeiro, pointed out that both the state government and the municipal administrations did not carry out the proper recomposition of careers, generating a professional devaluation and, consequently, a reduction in the demand for degree courses.

In January 2023, the MEC announced a 14.95% increase in the base salary, raising it to R\$4,420.55. However, no municipality in Alagoas applied the new amount at the time. SINTEAL highlighted that the non-implementation of the floor and the lack of adjustments in careers caused a significant salary gap, widening inequalities among education workers in the state.

That same year, in February, Governor Paulo Dantas decreed a 15% increase in the minimum salary of teachers in Alagoas, in line with the new national value. The adjustment was implemented in the salary of January of that year. However, a survey conducted by the Data Center of the State of Paraíba pointed out that, even after the increase, Alagoas remained among the states with the lowest salaries for public school teachers in the Northeast. The remuneration offered was R\$4,420.55 for professionals with a workload of 40 hours per week, equivalent to an average of R\$27.63 per hour worked, below the regional average of R\$29.61. Only Bahia had a lower value, with R\$24.04 per hour of work.

In June 2024, the state administration of Alagoas announced the retroactive discharge of the National Education Floor for 2,745 teachers, covering both active and

retired civil servants. The updated value of the floor increased by 3.62%, from R\$4,420.55 to R\$4,580.57, with retroactive effect to January 2024. The state secretary of Education, Roseane Vasconcelos, declared that this initiative showed the government's commitment to valuing education professionals.

Despite this progress, wage gaps have continued. In 2021, a survey carried out by SINTEAL indicated that the average remuneration of a teacher in Alagoas was R\$2,550.29, approximately 50% below the amount received by a teacher in the Federal District, which reached R\$5,167.64. Although the data refer to 2021, they show a devaluation trend that continued in the following years.

In summary, between 2022 and 2024, high school teachers in Alagoas faced difficulties related to salary inequalities, resulting from the non-full application of the national floors and the absence of career adjustments. Although increases and retroactive payments were made, the salaries of teachers in Alagoas remained below the regional average, highlighting the urgency of more efficient public policies for the appreciation of these fundamental professionals for education.

## **DIFFERENT RETURNS THROUGH GOVERNMENT INVESTMENTS**

The return on investment in education is widely recognized as one of the most significant and long-lasting, both on an individual and collective level. For the individual, education improves skills, increases employment opportunities, raises wages, and promotes social mobility. Studies show that people with higher education tend to earn more throughout their lives and experience greater financial stability.

At the collective level, the impact is equally remarkable. Societies with a higher level of education have better human development indexes, reduced poverty, increased economic productivity and lower social inequality. In addition, education contributes to the construction of active citizenship, promoting innovation, social cohesion and sustainable progress.

While the benefits of education may take years to fully manifest, the positive economic, social and cultural impact proves that the return on investment is substantial and essential for the development of individuals and societies. As an example, the educational program that proposes the articulation between the municipal and state education networks to guarantee the learning rights of students in public basic education in Alagoas. Some aspects that have been optimized with Escola 10 can be listed: this

program promotes pedagogical monitoring, the production of diversified teaching material and closely evaluates student performance.

According to information found on the website of the State Department of Education, "the municipality, the school and the students with the best performance are awarded the School 10 Award" (ALAGOAS, 2023). This program was implemented to solve situations such as: low performance in the Basic Education Development Index (IDEB), age-grade distortion and high illiteracy rates. Some means to solve the problems mentioned above were: pedagogical monitoring, teaching materials, implementation of evaluations and financial incentives.

## OPPORTUNITY FOR ENTRY INTO HIGH SCHOOL AND HIGHER EDUCATION FOR LOW-INCOME STUDENTS

The increase in the opportunity to enter high school and higher education for low-income students has been a policy implemented in public education. Public school educators realize that many of the students are from humble backgrounds, whose parents had little or no access to education and few resources for survival. However, these students take advantage of the access they have to education and see in it the possibility of changing their reality, that of their family and their community.

Teachers report that there are cases of students who went to school/college without having eaten due to lack of food at home, but who were helped by teachers and classmates. These students stood out for their perseverance, even completing high school and higher education with honors. As gratitude for what was provided to them, these students give back to society the provision of services with efficiency and quality.

Access to work provides better living conditions, which are reflected in housing, food and education. A specific example that is published in the media is of a student of indigenous origin who, despite all the difficulties faced during high school, managed to complete the course, enter medical school, graduate and return to his community to treat the health of that needy population.

## CONTINUING TEACHER TRAINING

The continuing education of teachers involves the investment of capital in continuing education and provides society with the opportunity to reduce poverty with the

possibility of better salaries. However, the development of the teaching curriculum is of fundamental importance to achieve good levels of social and economic development.

In this context, it is also necessary to observe the following fact: it is noted that professionals who do not hold a Master's or Doctor's degree, for example, earn less, although from the point of view of professional practice they have an experience that could guarantee them to have a remuneration equal to, or higher, than that of the one who has the title of said title.

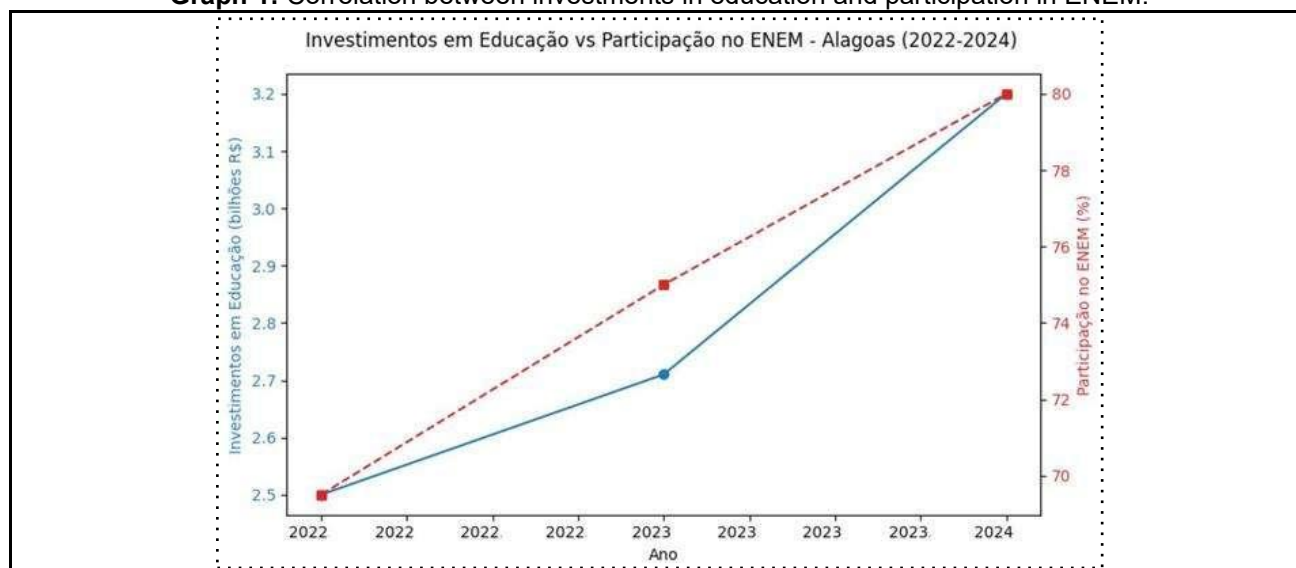
### **ADDITIONAL FACTORS THAT AFFECT RETURN**

The return on investment in education in the state of Alagoas between 2022 and 2024 was impacted by several additional factors that affected the effectiveness and results of the implemented educational policies. Initially, the significant increase in financial contributions played an essential role.

In 2023, the Government of Alagoas allocated R\$2.71 billion to education, which represented a growth of 8.4% compared to the R\$2.50 billion invested in 2022. This addition made it possible to expand educational programs, improve school infrastructure and value education professionals.

The graph below shows the relationship between investments in education in Alagoas and student participation in ENEM. In the continuous line, it is observed that investment increased from R\$2.50 billion in 2022 to R\$2.71 billion in 2023. The dashed line in the graph shows that student participation in ENEM rose from 69.5% in 2022 to 75.0% in 2023, and then to 80.0% in 2024. This growth indicates greater student engagement in the exam, possibly due to educational incentives, increased awareness, or new educational policies to support education.

**Graph 1: Correlation between investments in education and participation in ENEM.**



**Source:** INEP 2024; ENEM microdata, 2023.

**Caption:**  
Continuous line: Investments.  
Dashed line: Participation of students in ENEM.

It is worth noting that the partnership between the federal and state governments was essential. In 2023, the Ministry of Education transferred R\$58.9 million to Alagoas, intended for programs such as Full-Time School, National Literate Child Commitment, and Connected Schools. These funds complemented state investments, expanding the reach and quality of educational actions.

Another important element was the implementation of structuring programs, such as the "School of the Heart", which aimed to build 56 new school units in different regions of the state, directly benefiting more than 57 thousand students. This expansion of school infrastructure has helped to decrease overcrowding and provided more appropriate learning environments. The professional training of teachers also had a relevant impact. Investments in continuing education and salary appreciation resulted in more qualified and motivated educators, reflecting positively on the quality of the education offered.

Finally, the integration of educational technologies and the adoption of innovative methodologies have helped to increase student engagement and improve academic performance. Connectivity in schools, facilitated by programs such as "Connected Schools", has enabled access to digital resources that have enriched the teaching-learning process. In summary, financial investments, intergovernmental cooperation, the expansion of school infrastructure, teacher qualification, and the integration of educational

technologies were key factors that influenced the return on investment in education in Alagoas between 2022 and 2024.

## **ANALYSIS OF SPECIFIC CASES**

For many years, the state of Alagoas was among the federation units with the worst IDEB ratings, in addition to registering high illiteracy rates. However, in recent years, this reality has undergone significant transformations, with notable advances in educational indicators.

Much of these improvements can be attributed to the increase and reorientation of financial investments in education, which have focused both on school infrastructure and on teacher training, the implementation of educational technologies, and the expansion of access to quality education. This effort has generated positive effects on student performance and the reduction of school dropout rates, indicating that Alagoas is on the right track to reverse its educational history and promote a more inclusive and quality education for its population.

Alagoas exceeded the estimated goals for the IDEB 2023 at all levels of basic education. In high school, specifically, the IDEB went from 3.6 in 2021 to 4.1. A score close to the national high school average, which is 4.3. Thanks to this result, Alagoas has the 15th best IDEB in Brazil and the 4th in the Northeast.

According to information obtained from the Official Portal of the Government of Alagoas, the Monsenhor Luís Carlos de Oliveira State School (EEMLCO), in Ibateguara, is among the best high school scores in the IDEB. The Zona da Mata unit achieved an average of 6.6 and, for the second consecutive time, achieved the best IDEB of high school in Alagoas, even surpassing its performance in 2021, when it scored 6.2.

**Image 1:** EEMLCO classroom.



**Source:** Alagoas government website, 2025.

According to the institution's general manager, Raabe Bispo, the success achieved by the school is due to the "prioritization of the student and the continuous investment in teacher training". Among the actions that contributed to this result, individualized pedagogical monitoring, teacher training carried out through the Collective Pedagogical Work Schedule (HTPC) and the implementation of strategies to ensure students' school attendance, such as active search and visits to the community, stand out.

However, it is important to recognize that such initiatives only became viable thanks to the commitment of managers and teachers, who, in addition to dedicating themselves to pedagogical development, also have an adequate physical infrastructure and decent salaries. For the students, the offer of quality school meals and supplies were also essential, fundamental elements to ensure a more effective and welcoming learning environment. These conditions, together with the commitment of education professionals, have been crucial for the progress of the institution and for the success of the students.

Another highlight in the state of Alagoas has been the overcoming of goals in participation and grades in ENEM. The state education network had an increase of 11 percentage points in the participation of students in the two days of ENEM exams in 2024. Data collected by the State Department of Education (SEDUC) indicate that, compared to the 2023 edition, the number of participants rose from 69.5% in 2023 to 80% in 2024.

The increase was greater than that recorded in Alagoas and Brazil in 2024. In the state, the average participation on both days rose from 68.2% to 72.1%, representing an increase of almost 4 percentage points. In the country, the rate went from 70% to 71.45%, an increase of 1.45 percentage points.

In 2024, the Government of Alagoas' program aimed at strengthening the preparation of students in the state network achieved significant results. Foca ENEM distributed one million copies of specific didactic material and promoted 229 classes covering various areas of knowledge. In addition, 16 (sixteen) online and live "classes" were held, accessible to all schools, reaching 71,973 (seventy-one thousand, nine hundred and seventy-three) views.

A preliminary survey by SEDUC reveals that a significant number of graduates from the state network achieved scores above 900 points. Among them is Anna Jhulia Ferreira, a student at the Professora Margareze Maria Santos Lacet State School, in the Tabuleiro dos Martins neighborhood, who obtained 960 points in the essay on the theme "Challenges for the appreciation of African heritage in Brazil". Anna presented her desire to be the first in her family to enter Higher Education and dreams of a place in the Journalism course at the Federal University of Alagoas (UFAL). She said she was very satisfied with the score she achieved.

**Image 2:** Anna Jhulia Ferreira



**Source:** Alagoas Department of Education website, 2025.

The example cited above is just one of countless success stories in the state of Alagoas in relation to ENEM scores. This is a direct reflection of investment in education, promoting quality education, with programs to value teachers, construction of new schools and offering scholarships. These investments not only raise student performance, but also boost the state's economic and social potential, demonstrating that education is undoubtedly one of the pillars for sustainable growth and for transforming the reality of the most vulnerable populations.

## CONSIDERATION OF EXTERNAL FACTORS

The return on investment in basic education, especially in high school in Alagoas, is impacted by a series of external factors that can both help and hinder this process.

Among the factors that help we can mention:

- a) Improvements in school infrastructure, such as the construction of new buildings, modernization of equipment, and access to educational technologies, facilitate student learning and development, increasing the chances of a good return on investment;
- b) Continuing education programs for teachers and enhancement of the teaching career contribute to better quality teaching. Well-prepared and motivated teachers have a positive impact on student learning;
- c) Financial support initiatives for students from low-income families, such as scholarship or aid programs, help keep more students in school, reducing school dropout and increasing the quality of education;
- d) Partnerships with companies and non-governmental organizations can bring financial resources, teaching materials, extracurricular programs, and even mentoring to students. This strengthens the educational environment and expands learning opportunities;
- e) And well-structured public policies aimed at education, such as improving teachers' salaries, expanding school transportation programs, and distributing teaching materials, can increase the return on investment.

In this sense, we realize that the factors that help in the return on investment in basic education in Alagoas, especially in high school, are directly linked to the improvement of infrastructure conditions, teacher qualification, financial support and the implementation of effective public policies. Investments in these areas create a more conducive environment for learning, favoring the permanence of students in school and, consequently, increasing the chances of a more promising future for young people in the region. These actions contribute to the construction of quality education, positively impacting the social and economic development of the state.

With regard to the factors that hinder investment in education in the state of Alagoas, there are:

- a) Social inequality, which can negatively affect student performance. Many students face financial difficulties, lack of access to learning resources, and family problems, which hinder their academic performance;
- b) The lack of investments in some regions, especially small towns in the state. Schools with precarious facilities, lack of internet, equipment and adequate pedagogical materials hinder quality teaching;
- c) School dropout, often caused by economic factors or lack of motivation, undermines the return on investment. When students drop out of school before completing high school, the investment in their education does not translate into effective results;
- d) The mismanagement of public resources allocated to education and the lack of oversight over the use of these resources can result in waste or misuse of the budget, which compromises the return on investment;
- e) Violence in and around schools can affect the quality of education, demotivate students and teachers, and even cause school dropout. Insecurity harms the educational environment and hinders the learning process;
- f) The lack of involvement of families and the community in educational issues can harm the development of the student. Education is most effective when it is supported and valued by all social actors.

The obstacles presented above reduce the effectiveness of educational policies and prevent students from having full access to the benefits of a quality education, limiting their future opportunities and negatively affecting the social and economic progress of the state.

These external factors, positive or negative, have a direct impact on the return on investments made in basic education. To maximize this return, it is crucial that public policies integrate solutions to the region's structural and social problems.

## **EVOLUTION OF EDUCATIONAL POLICIES**

The State Education Plan (PEE) of Alagoas is a document that establishes goals and guidelines for education in the state and is redone every 10 years. The document that is currently in force is the one that covers the period from 2015 to 2025. The proposal

followed the precepts established by the National Education Plan (PNE) in force at the time and established a total of 20 goals to be achieved at the end of the period.

Among the guidelines of the state plan are the eradication of illiteracy, the universalization of school attendance and the promotion of the principle of democratic management of public education. With regard to secondary education, the goals established were:

- § Universalize, by 2016, school attendance for the entire population aged 15 (fifteen) to 17 (seventeen) years and raise the net enrollment rate in high school to at least 53% (fifty-three percent) in the 3rd year, 69% (sixty-nine percent) in the 6th year and 85% (eighty-five percent) in the 9th year of validity of this PEE.
- § Offer full-time education in at least 50% (fifty percent) of public schools, in order to serve at least 25% (twenty-five percent) of students in basic education.
- § Promote the quality of basic education in all stages and modalities, with improvement of the school flow and learning in order to achieve the following national averages for the IDEB:

**Table 1:** Goals to be achieved.

	2015	2017	2019	2021
<b>Anos Iniciais do ensino fundamental</b>	5,2	5,5	5,7	6,0
<b>Anos Finais do ensino fundamental</b>	4,7	5,0	5,2	5,5
<b>Ensino médio</b>	4,3	4,7	5,0	5,2

**Source:** Alagoas, State Education Plan, 2015.

- § offer at least 25% (twenty-five percent) of the enrollments in Youth and Adult Education in the State of Alagoas, in elementary and secondary education, in the form integrated with professional education, until the end of the term of this plan.
- § triple the enrollment of technical professional education at the secondary level, ensuring the quality of the offer and at least 50% (fifty percent) of the expansion in the public segment.

In order to achieve the aforementioned goals, the government of Alagoas instituted two programs to increase high school education in the state: the Alagoas Integral Education Program (PALEI) and the School 10 Program, the latter associated with the Mentor Teacher Program.

PALEI was instituted in 2015 by SEDUC of Alagoas. The program was launched from a pilot project at the Marcos Antônio State School, in Maceió and established by decrees No. 40,207 of April 20, 2015 and No. 50,331 of September 12, 2016. On July 23, 2024, Law 9,341/2024, published in the Official State Gazette, institutionalized PALEI as a permanent policy.

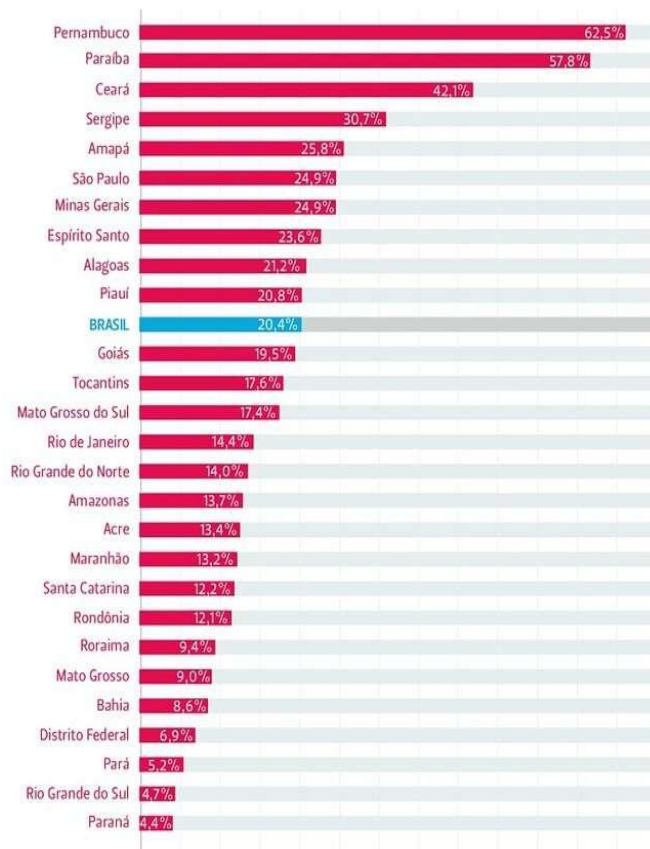
The goal of PALEI is to ensure quality education for high school students, preparing them to be critical, autonomous, and competent citizens. The main characteristics of the program are: a 7 or 9-hour study day, a curriculum with a broader formation, activities that strengthen learning, appreciation of diversity, promotion of access to different areas such as culture, sports and information, and the involvement of families and the community in the educational process.

According to the current secretary of education of the state of Alagoas, Roseane Vasconcelos, PALEI is one of the most successful state actions, contributing not only to the improvement of educational indices such as the IDEB, but also to the approval of students in ENEM, according to information obtained from the Official Portal of the Government of Alagoas. The current goal is to expand it even more in the next two years, through the 'School of the Heart' program, where 56 more teaching units will be built in various regions of the state.

The number of schools in Alagoas that offer full-time education is 618 (six hundred and eighteen), or 26.9% of the total public schools in the state. The information is from the 2022 School Census of the National Institute for Educational Studies and Research (INEP). The number of enrollments registered in the full-time modality last year was 113.8 thousand, or 19.1% of the total in Alagoas.

Although there is still a long way to go, the state has been registering a growing number of attention to full-time education. In the comparison between 2021 and 2022, in high school the jump was from 19.9% to 21.2% from one year to the next, slightly above the national average of 20.4%.

**Graph 2:** Proportion of full-time students enrolled in public high school in Alagoas.



**Source:** Inep/School Census, 2022.

The School 10 Program, in turn, was instituted in Alagoas in 2018 and proposes the articulation between the municipal and state education networks to guarantee learning rights and reduce the dropout of students from public Basic Education in Alagoas.

In 2022, as part of the School 10 Program, the School Grant 10 Program was created. This includes the School Card 10, which grants financial benefits, in the form of a monthly scholarship, to high school and Youth and Adult Education (EJA) students. For those who study part-time, the monthly amount is R\$100.00. For full-time students, the value is R\$150.00. Upon completing high school, students receive the amount of R\$2,000.00.

The Program's set of actions aims to ensure that all students in the public education systems are literate in Portuguese Language and Mathematics by the end of the 3rd year of elementary school, reduce the rates of incomplete literacy, insufficient literacy and the age-grade distortion in Basic Education, increase the IDEB and build proposals for the definition of the learning and development rights of students in Basic Education.

Since its implementation, the actions of Escola 10 have involved the mobilization of a structure of support, encouragement and collaboration among those responsible for public education in the state, such as: support for networks and teachers, with continued training for teachers, production of teaching materials, periodic evaluations to closely monitor the development of students, awards and financial incentives for schools that have improved performance and achieved the goals established by the Department of Education State of Education of Alagoas. As shown in figure 3, several laws, decrees and ordinances have been instituted since the implementation of the program.

**Figure 3:** Main laws and decrees of the School Program 10.

#### PRINCIPAIS LEIS E DECRETOS DO ESCOLA 10

**Decreto n.º 51.237/2016:** cria o Prêmio de Qualidade da Educação Municipal Professor Ib Gatto Falcão, destinado a laurear as escolas públicas municipais com melhor desempenho no Ideb de cada município.

**Portaria/SEDUC n.º 3.537/2018:** regulamenta, no âmbito da Educação, o prêmio de Qualidade da Educação Municipal Professor Ib Gatto Falcão, prevendo o total de R\$ 20 mil a ser repassado para aquisição de material de custeio da unidade de ensino contemplada.

**Lei n.º 8.048/2018:** institui o Programa Escola 10 e define as diretrizes gerais, transformando-o em política pública de Estado.

**Portaria/SEDUC 1.693/2018:** estabelece os procedimentos, requisitos mínimos e critérios a serem considerados para a seleção de profissionais efetivos da rede pública estadual, que devem atuar como Articuladores de Ensino.

**Lei n.º 8.171/2019:** cria o Prêmio Escola 10 e autoriza o Poder Executivo Estadual a premiar os municípios que alcancem as metas estabelecidas pela Seduc com base no Ideb. Estabelece, ainda, premiação no valor de R\$ 20 milhões, dos quais R\$ 10 milhões para os anos iniciais e R\$ 10 milhões para os anos finais do Ensino Fundamental. Esses recursos são transferidos aos municípios e podem ser investidos em qualquer área de atuação do serviço público.

**Lei n.º 8.224/2019:** cria a bonificação decorrente do alcance de metas do Ideb, que beneficia tanto os servidores das unidades escolares estaduais, quanto aqueles lotados na Seduc e nas Gerências Regionais de Educação.

**Portaria/SEDUC n.º 479/2019:** estabelece os procedimentos para a seleção de docentes das redes municipais de ensino para exercer, como bolsista, a função de Articulador de Ensino nas Secretarias Municipais de Educação e nas escolas das redes municipais.

**Decreto n.º 77.208/2022:** que instituiu o programa bolsa escola 10.

**Source:** Alagoas Department of Education website, 2025.

The School 10 Program has consolidated itself as the largest program to combat school dropout in the country. It represents an investment in the state education network of about R\$585 million so far and also served as inspiration for the launch of the Pé-de-Meia Program, nationwide and promoted by the Federal Government.

Many achievements in education in Alagoas have been achieved with the School Card 10, with national highlights, such as the increase in the IDEB, which went from 3.6 in 2021 to 4.1 in 2023; the increase in the SAEB score, which placed Alagoas as the second state that stood out the most nationally; and the aid for Alagoas to meet the goals of the PNE. This increase showed that in the 2014-2024 decade, the state improved in

segments such as full-time education and EJA. In addition, the program received the Darcy Ribeiro Education Award 2023, an initiative of the Education Commission of the Chamber of Deputies.

## RESULTS

The present research sought to investigate the return on investments made in high school in Alagoas during the period from 2022 to 2024. The justification for the choice of the theme lies in the relevance of discussing the implementation of affirmative actions that aim to reduce dropout and leverage the teaching and learning process. Thus, the results show that the salary disparity between teachers is a chronic problem in Brazil. In Alagoas, the starting salary of a teacher for 40 hours a week is R\$5,501.43, while in Mato Grosso do Sul it is R\$12,380.66 for the same workload. This discrepancy in salaries is one of the main challenges faced by education in Alagoas.

In addition, the research concludes that government investments in basic education can have different jobs and returns. Factors such as empathy in problem solving, solvency of demands related to infrastructure, teaching materials in sufficient quantities and adequate meals are paramount for a growing improvement in educational results.

Another important factor to be highlighted converges on the opportunity to enter high school and higher education for low-income students. It is in the light of the advance in citizen education that the government, especially the state of Alagoas, must invest, more and more, in educational programs analogous to Escola 10, Professor Mentor and Escolas Conectadas.

It is important to emphasize that, despite the investments made, it is necessary to promote inspections on who and how they are receiving the incentives so that new investments can be made more effectively.

In view of the above, the research also highlighted the role played by the teacher for the success of the students. In addition, the research also analyzed the relationship between investments in education and the economic development of the state. The results show that investments in education have a positive impact on the economic development of the state, as they contribute to the formation of a qualified workforce and to the increase of productivity.

In summary, the research concludes that affirmative action programs can give a return on investment in education. The foundation of public policies aimed at education

can prevent dropout and promote the teaching and learning process, as long as there is a more effective monitoring of the performance of the student who receives the scholarship.

In addition, it is important to highlight that education is a fundamental right and that the State has a responsibility to ensure that everyone has access to quality education. It is necessary for governments, society and educational institutions to work together to ensure that investments in this area are effective and applied responsibly.

## DISCUSSION

The research in question deals with a theme referring to the return on investment in basic education in Alagoas in high school, with a time frame that comprises the years 2022 to 2024. As a justification for this period, there is the implementation of the School 10 and Mentor Teacher Programs, both started in 2022, which aimed at educational evolution in the areas of reducing dropout and advancing learning in the State of Alagoas.

The study in question dealt with salary disparities, the different returns for educational institutions in the face of government investments, the opportunity for low-income students to enter secondary and higher education, the role of the teacher, the salary disparities, as well as the different returns on investments in education.

The research reflected here was of a bibliographic nature; therefore, a field research did not fit for the theme. From this situational perspective, it should be noted that the salary disparity among teachers is a chronic problem in Brazil. In Alagoas<sup>6</sup>, the starting salary of a teacher (40 hours per week) is R\$5,501.43, while in Mato Grosso do Sul, for the same workload, the salary corresponds to R\$12,380.66.

It can be inferred that government investments in basic education can have different jobs, which can bring different returns to educational institutions. Similarly to the investment in teachers' salaries, it should be noted that factors such as management, infrastructure, availability of teaching materials, and political will are also relevant for improving educational results and the consequent return on investment.

In addition, it is possible to understand that the opportunity to enter high school and higher education is a crucial factor for low-income students. It is with the intention of encouraging the access and permanence of needy students that the State of Alagoas invests in educational programs, including encouraging them to take the ENEM test, linking this act to the payment of a completion scholarship in the amount of R\$2000.00.

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<sup>6</sup> According to information released by the Union of Education Workers of Alagoas (SINTEAL).

In this conception and in the impetus to achieve success, the role of the teacher is built as a fundamental factor for the success of students. It is possible to understand that investments boost the state's economy, reaffirming that education is the foundation for building a more egalitarian, prosperous and just society.

In time, it can be understood that affirmative action programs can give a return on investment in education. In this way, the greater the implementation of public policies aimed at education that aim to prevent dropout and promote the teaching and learning process, the greater the feedback that the state will have. In summary, individual transformations cause social transformations and these trigger cultural changes and improvements in the quality of life of individuals.

## **CONCLUSION**

The return on investment in basic education in Alagoas is a complex and multifaceted issue, which involves economic, social and political aspects. In this article, we analyze the data and trends related to investment in basic education in Alagoas, and conclude that the return on investment is significant, but there is still much to be done to improve the quality of education in the state.

As Hanushek and Wößmann (2015) state, "education is a fundamental investment for the economic and social development of any country" (p. 12). In addition, basic education is fundamental for the formation of critical, reflective citizens committed to social transformation (Freire, 2011).

Our analysis of the data showed that investment in basic education in Alagoas has increased in recent years, but there is still a large disparity between public and private schools (IBGE, 2022). In addition, the completion rate of primary and secondary education in Alagoas is still low, especially in rural and peripheral areas (INEP, 2022). As Todaro and Smith (2015) point out, "education is a fundamental human right and an essential component of sustainable development" (p. 15). Therefore, it is essential that the government of Alagoas and civil society work together to improve the quality of basic education in the state, increasing investment in infrastructure, teacher training, and pedagogical resources.

Finally, the return on investment in basic education in Alagoas is significant, but there is still much to be done to improve the quality of education in the state. It is critical that the government and civil society work together to increase investment in education,

improve infrastructure and teacher training, and ensure that all students have access to quality education.

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