



## Educational settings in the municipality of Uberaba, Minas Gerais: decentralization and organization of primary public education (1895-1912)<sup>1</sup>

Configurações educacionais no âmbito do município de Uberaba, Minas Gerais: descentralização e organização da instrução pública primária (1895-1912)

Configuraciones educativas en lo municipio de uberaba, minas gerais: descentralización y organización de la instrucción pública primaria (1895-1912)

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### Abstract

From the perspective of the local space, in this case, the municipality of Uberaba-MG during the years 1895 to 1912, this article seeks to deal with the process of organizing public education that took place locally and its relationship with the broader context of the first years of the Brazilian republican period. Therefore, we prioritize the work with documents produced by the legislative power, especially the Minutes of the City Council, seeking to demonstrate how the municipality participated in the schooling process that characterizes that ambience in the early years of the recently Proclaimed Brazilian Republic. In the wake of discussions related to the country's educational problem, we are faced with the issue of political-administrative decentralization and the role of municipalities, in view of the educational scenario of the time, which allowed municipalities, in particular Uberaba, to constitute themselves as an idealization and action body in matters of public education. In this sense, the Uberaba City Council acted effectively in the educational issue, proposing laws, creating and maintaining schools, appointing and remunerating teachers, thus configuring an educational organization based on the municipality itself.

**Keywords:** Primary education. Decentralization. Municipality. Uberaba.

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## Resumo

A partir da perspectiva do espaço local, isto é, o município de Uberaba-MG, situado temporalmente entre 1895 a 1912, o presente artigo procura tratar do processo de organização da instrução pública ocorrido localmente e sua relação com o contexto mais amplo dos primeiros anos do período republicano brasileiro. Para tanto, priorizamos o trabalho com documentos produzidos pelo poder legislativo, em especial as Atas da Câmara Municipal, buscando demonstrar de que modo a municipalidade participou do processo de escolarização que caracteriza aquela ambiência nos anos iniciais da recém Proclamada República brasileira. Na esteira das discussões relativas ao problema educacional do País nos deparamos com a questão da descentralização político-administrativa e o papel das municipalidades, frente ao cenário educacional da época, o qual possibilitava aos municípios, em particular o de Uberaba, constituir-se enquanto instância de idealização e de ação em matéria de instrução pública. Neste sentido, a Câmara Municipal de Uberaba atuou de forma efetiva na questão educacional, propondo leis, criando e mantendo escolas, nomeando e remunerando professores, configurando, assim, uma organização educativa a partir da própria instância do município.

**Palavras-chave:** Instrução primária. Descentralização. Município. Uberaba.

## Resumen

Desde la perspectiva del espacio local, o sea, el municipio de Uberaba-MG durante los años 1895 a 1912, este artículo busca analizar el proceso de organización de la instrucción pública que se desarrolló localmente y su relación con el contexto más amplio de los primeros años del período republicano brasileño. Por ello, priorizamos el trabajo con documentos elaborados por el poder legislativo, especialmente las Actas de lo Consejo Municipal, buscando demostrar cómo el municipio participó en el proceso de escolarización que caracteriza ese ambiente de la recién proclamada República Brasileña. Junto a las discusiones relacionadas con la problemática educativa del país, enfrentamos el tema de la descentralización político-administrativa y el rol de los gobiernos locales, ante el escenario educativo de la época, que permitió a los municipios, en particular a Uberaba, convertirse en una instancia de idealización y acción en materia de educación pública. En este sentido, la municipalidad de Uberaba actuó eficazmente en el tema educativo, proponiendo leyes, creando y manteniendo escuelas, nombrando y retribuyendo a los profesores, configurando así una organización educativa basada en el propio municipio.

**Palabras-clave:** Instrucción primaria. Descentralización. Municipio. Uberaba.

## Introduction

Conceived from global contexts, education takes shape in a local context, in the form of actions of organization of the public education; it is institutionalized under different models and takes its own shape according to schooling processes that highlight the peculiarity of each place. Having different degrees of autonomy and protagonism, the municipalities have been essential bodies for understanding the history of Brazilian Education, especially in the context of the early years of the Brazilian republican period, in regards particularly to the state of Minas Gerais. Justino Magalhães emphasizes below the importance of the local context within the scope of historical studies:

Conceived in global contexts, education takes place in the local context. On a historical level, the formal educational site may take on the configurations of institution, municipality, biography. The educational is part of and constitutes the local, that, in this way, developed due to the educational. Allowing different configurations, it was as institution-school that the institution of education changed the society. (MAGALHÃES, 2018, p.41).

From such perspective the intention is to present and analyze the documents produced by the municipal legislative power of Uberaba (City Council). The documents analyzed are: Minutes of the City Council of Uberaba, specifically the record books of the sessions from 1895 to 1905; Book of Laws of Uberaba City Council Department (1903-1912); Teacher's Appointment Book; and data related to the budget of the City Council of Uberaba, available in six issues of a journal of Uberaba called "Almanach Uberabense (1906-1911)". These documents refer to the period from 1895 to 1912 and delimit the time frame selected in the reflection of the present paper.

In general terms, the present study is about the schooling process that took place in the region of Uberaba-MG at the beginning of the Brazilian republic. The goal is to show, within the local context, how the municipality participated in this educational-historical process of organizing the public education. By observing the local peculiarities, the aim is to establish relations with broader educational process.

Understanding the relations between federalism, centralization and decentralization is key to comprehend the discussions within the educational reality of Uberaba-MG at the beginning of the Brazilian republican period, especially considering the centrality assigned to school education, and also analyzing the role played by the municipalities in such scenarios.

### **On educational decentralization to the "pedagogical municipality".**

After being an Empire, Brazil became a Republic. In addition to political, economic, and social transformations, school education went through some changes, and thus it stood out. As Brazil became a Republic, the country not only had its political regime changed, but also a new way of state organization, based on federalism. While maintaining a decentralizing tendency originated in the Empire, particularly in the Additional Act of 1834, the change in the political system takes place in a specific way, as a peculiar type of federalism takes shape in our country, forming what we may call "Brazilian style federalism" (FERREIRA; CARVALHO; GONÇALVES NETO, 2016).

Such a topic is essential for understanding the educational reality in the early years of the Republic, since this context of decentralization allowed the states and municipalities to establish their own forms of organizing public education. At the beginning of the Republic, federalism and the administrative-political decentralization reflected in the educational field, especially in primary schooling:

The national debate on public education during the republican period, going through centralization and decentralization, reflected locally, because in several places in the country, the municipalization of primary schooling its effects should follow the same principle: primary education was supposed to be more the responsibility of the municipality than of the state, even though it shared with the latter the responsibility for its offer. (FERREIRA; CARVALHO; GONÇALVES NETO, 2016, p. 115).

Municipal authorities made it possible, in their specific historical conditions, to act in the promotion and organization of public education, elaborating proposals and undertaking actions in benefit of regional and/or local public education. Even though there was a belief in the regenerative power of education at the beginning of the Republic, within the principle of decentralization, the states and municipalities were the ones in charge for spreading schooling and organizing public education. (GONÇALVES NETO; CARVALHO, 2015).

These changes, mainly observed during the First Brazilian Republic, initiated, within the context of the latter, the belief in progress, as well as the wishes of modernity. Thus, in these intentions, education appeared in a prominent place in the political projects at that time, even if they were much more circumscribed in the rhetorical field than in an effective materialization of the debates held by political leaders in benefit of education.

The condition assigned to school education, as a reference and condition for the progress of the nation, was based on the belief that it would be an indispensable element for the civilizing progress:

It is clear that education was the element used to combine the new era of modification, which was the base structure for legitimizing the precepts of the ruling class; an instrument that made the civilizing process possible and aims to train people for a “democratic” rule of law according to liberalism. (CARVALHO; CARVALHO, 2012, p. 46).

Due to the centrality of school education in the context of the First Brazilian Republic, it is important to analyze its implications in the context of the state of Minas Gerais, more specifically, in the municipal reality, a privileged locus of organization of public education at that time. A local study is of the utmost importance, due to the fact that, in the context of educational decentralization at the beginning of the Republic, the municipalities, responding locally to the gap left by the higher authorities, took part of this responsibility, acting as promoters and organizers of education in their jurisdiction.

When analyzing the process of organizing education locally, the movement of organizing public education that took place in Brazil at the beginning of the Republic is also considered. In order to understand such period, it is necessary to take a close look at the municipal peculiarities observed during this process:

When talking about education in the state of Minas Gerais at the beginning of the Republic, and probably in most states in Brazil, one may not think about a single education system, or in a process that operates equally around the country. In fact, the process is unequal and presents several aspects. There are actions performed by the State and complementary initiatives by the municipalities. There are also omissions in both bodies, and also attempts of one supporting the absences of the other. (GONÇALVES NETO; CARVALHO, 2012, p. 21)

The constitutional text of 1891 grants a greater degree of autonomy to the states of the federal (Brazil, 1891). Thus, the decentralization predominant in the political sphere, also in the field of education, is also promoted. Education, a much debated issue on the eve of the Proclamation, is mentioned in the Republican Constitution only in the sense of subrogating responsibility to the federal entities. The Constitution of 1891 is silent regarding important matters related to public education, which makes it possible and conditions decentralized initiatives for the organization of education. State governments, within this context, took part of the responsibility for education, in some cases with the help of municipalities organizing and promoting education.

In the state of Minas Gerais, the first republican period reflected a process regarding the organization of public education. Right at the beginning, laws and decrees aiming to reform primary schooling were approved. The Constitutional text of the state of Minas Gerais, other than the Federal Constitution, offered greater attention towards education, establishing the state competence to promote the development of public education, as well as legislating on primary schooling in its jurisdiction (MINAS GERAIS, 1891). Nevertheless, decentralization, guaranteed at the federal level, will also be proceeded in relation to the state legislation. Following the precepts of the Federal Constitution, the 1891 Constitutional text of Minas Gerais assigned municipal councils free deliberation on several matters, including primary schooling.

The responsibility for public education, which had already been given to federal states, in observance of the principles of decentralization, reflects on local authority. Thus, it became almost full responsibility of the municipalities promoting, organizing, and administering public education in its jurisdiction. A considerable part for the development of public education was assigned to municipal administration. The municipal councils were able to “function freely in the field of public education, by creating schools, hiring teachers, supervising activities etc”. (GONÇALVES NETO, 2010, p. 198). Therefore, one may consider that it was in the municipal sphere that much of the republican effort for organizing public education was developed, since the educational achievements at the local level were quite significant.

Such relative autonomy and a certain municipal protagonism, in regards to education, were seen in different ways: in the approval of specific laws in its jurisdiction, creation of schools, hiring and payment of teachers, distribution of learning material, allocation of funds in order to finance municipal schools and, once in a while, also in the form of claims with the state government of actions for the benefit of municipal public education. Such initiatives vary, but they reinforce the perspective of local authority’s freedom of action concerning public education.

Due to the growing republican demand for education, the local authority starts to make decisions and act in matters related to public education. The budget limitations of the state government reinforced its willingness to share, or even transfer the responsibilities of public education. “The goal of the state was clear: offering the population schools, regardless of their origin: public or private, state or municipal, secular or religious.”(GONÇALVES NETO, 2012, p. 39.). The participation of municipalities in the business of education was not only supported

by legislation, but it also met the interests of the state government, which aimed to share the costs with public education.

This educational action of the municipal authority has been analyzed by us in the light of the conception of the “pedagogical municipality” (MAGALHÃES, 2014; 2015; GONÇALVES NETO; CARVALHO, 2012; 2015; CARVALHO; CARVALHO, 2012). This is a category of educational historiography that conceives the municipality not only as a political-administrative entity, but also as a pedagogical territory. Such a situation is made possible by the presence of a decentralizing legislation that assigns the local authority the organization and promotion of public education. There is reference to the possibility and capacity of the local authority of organizing and establishing its own paradigms for municipal education, within a certain context of decentralization that enables its manifestation. It refers to the several initiatives undertaken in the municipalities in regards to promoting and organizing public education in their jurisdiction.

Thus, the municipality is established as a body of decision and action regarding education, as it presents its own forms of organization and administration of public education, that is, an “educational offer of its own”, according to Magalhães (2015). Thereby, analyses focused on the local level may contribute significantly to broaden the understanding on the process of organization of public education taken place in the early years of the Republic.

In the state of Minas Gerais, for example, there was an aspect of complementing efforts between states and municipalities in the organization and offering of public education. In other words:

The responsibility for education is transferred, implicitly, to the states and, when possible, as in Minas Gerais, they transfer part of the responsibility to the municipalities. This either stimulates or allows the materialization of the so-called pedagogical municipality. Considering it does not have anyone to transfer the obligation to - while leading directly with the demands of the citizens, will eventually take over education and organize it within its limits.  
(GONÇALVES NETO; CARVALHO, 2015, p. 13).

This is not only about creating educational laws, hiring and paying teachers, or founding and keeping schools that the municipal authority plays such an educational role, but also for being responsible for such. In the early years of the Republic “the local authority was able to assume a conduct identified as a pedagogical municipality, which is encouraged by the state, unable to discharge positively its educational responsibility to the people of Minas Gerais.” (GONÇALVES NETO, 2012, p. 41).

Therefore the importance of studying the process of organizing public education locally, as well as its relations with state and national discussions. In a change of perspective, the municipality must be conceived as a historiographical object. In the words of Carvalho and Carvalho (2012), “it is possible to articulate it with national/global politics and not forget the local” (p. 68). The municipal educational reality has its own characteristics, which can confirm or even contradict broader educational processes in which it is inserted.

### **Uberaba City Council and the conceptions of education.**

Before discussing the educational actions undertaken by the City Council, it is necessary to briefly introduce the municipality in question. The urban area of Uberaba was the center of a region then called *Sertão da Farinha Podre*, which had at that time the territorial extension now known as *Triângulo Mineiro*. During the transition from the Empire to the Republic, the city was one of the

main municipalities of the region and also of the countryside of Brazil. The city was known for being a commercial, cultural, and public service center. (LOURENÇO, 2010).

Uberaba was not only an urban center, but it also had an important role in the region in regards to education. According to a local memorialist, it is possible to have an overview of the education in the city at that time:

There are many schools for female students, as well as for male students. A large variety of state and municipal primary schools for both genders. One normal school with suspended classes; a seminar. One school run by Dominican Missionary sisters for schooling girls, to which the state government granted the faculty of normal school, attended by about 300 female students - most of them studied without any cost. One school for the education of boys willing to study in higher education, run by the Marist Brothers, to which the federal government granted equivalency to the National Gymnasium. There was even, recently, a Zootechnical Institute, where eight students finished the regular course and were awarded with the agronomist diploma. (SAMPAIO, 1971, p. 132).

There were private, municipal, and state elementary schools, in addition to secondary school, among which important denominational schools such as the Diocesan College and *Colégio Nossa Senhora das Dores*. Considering the amount of schools (private, denominational, municipal, and state), one may imply that Uberaba was going through a process of organization and diffusion of primary schooling at the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century.

The municipality of Uberaba, in the early years of the Republic, was composed of four districts: the main city; Nossa Senhora da Conceição das Alagoas (Garimpo); Nossa Senhora das Dores do Campo Formoso, and São Miguel do Veríssimo (CAPRI, 1916, p. 41). These districts correspond, currently, to neighboring municipalities of Uberaba: Conceição das Alagoas, Campo Florido, and Veríssimo, respectively.

It is important to note that, at that time, a district was the basis of administrative organization of the state of Minas Gerais:

The legislators of Minas Gerais took high regard of not only the principle of municipal autonomy, but also, and probably with greater emphasis, of the principle of decentralization of power. The administrative jurisdiction must not be limited only to the municipalities, with respect to a process of recognition of its historical importance, but it is extended to the districts, as they become the “basis of administrative organization”. Thus, the municipality now has a format similar in some aspects to that of the states, as a type of “federation” of districts. (GONÇALVES NETO, 2012, p. 34-35).

The political and administrative decentralization, which originates much from federalism and the prescriptions in this sense present in the Federal Constitution, is reinforced in the organization of the state of Minas Gerais. The municipality at that time had autonomy, but it was still composed of districts: smaller territorial and administrative units, which also corresponded to bodies of decision and action, political and educational.

This decentralized administrative and educational organization is also noticed when the Minutes of the City Council (Uberaba) are analyzed. There were city councillors elected for

every district: they were known as special city councillors. They usually presented bills and demands related to the district they represented. The City Council also held elections in each of the districts of the municipality for the positions of Justice of the Peace, and members of District Councils and School Councils.

The School Councils met a prescription established by the state reform of primary schooling in 1892 (known as *Afonso Pena Reform*). Although this reform seemed to be centralizing, for concentrating the administration and supervision of education as a function of the State President, it demonstrates, in an accurate analysis “the concern of the legislator in decentralizing education” (MOURÃO, 1962, p. 24). The *Afonso Pena Reform* assigned much of the responsibility for education to regional or local bodies, such as the District and Municipal School Councils.

Considered by Mourão (1962) as “tools characteristic of the decentralization of education” (p. 25), the Municipal School Councils were composed of five elected members. The president of the council was elected by the other members and also performed the role of municipal inspector. There were also district school councils:

The districts had their own “district school councils”, where three of the members were elected. They elected the president who would become the district inspector. The assignments of these councils in the districts were the same as in the municipal councils in the municipalities. (MOURÃO, 1962, p. 26).

There were also, in the villages, the role of superintendent of district or municipal inspector, according to the jurisdiction to which they were subjected. In general, both councils functioned in the fiscalization of the local public education. Thus, one may realize the degree of the educational and administrative decentralization observed in Minas Gerais and in its municipalities in the early years of the Republic.

In Uberaba, the City Council was in charge to perform the procedures of election of the School Council members of every district part of the municipality. In 1895, for example, the Council proceeded with a School Councilors election. Here are the records made by the City Council regarding the first case:

Minutes of the ordinary session on July 2nd, 1895. In the same opportunity an official letter from the President was presented and read, as well as a member of the School Council of this same district, Dr. Ramiro Antonio Silveiro, communicating the vacant positions in the same Council due to a change of the member Antonio de Souza Guimarães and resignation of the Vice President Cap. Carlos Baptista Machado in order to proceed, in accordance with the law, the election of their substitutes. Taking the City Council into consideration, the respective election was proceeded, with the members present, after having certified they had been elected for such purpose. Te. Galdino Antonio da Silva and Alfredo dos Santos, who will be officially notified to attend the session on the 10th, at noon, in order to take office and start their duties. (Minutes of the CMU - Uberaba City Council, 1895, Book 3, p. 190).

Here are the appointments of School Counselors, in 1896, in ordinary session on May 05th, on the Agenda:



The distinguished Mr. President stated that if there were four positions open in the Municipal School Body, it would be appropriate for the City Council to fill them in accordance with art. 151 § 1º, decree No 655, of October 17th, 1893. The City Council deliberated that on the last day of this ordinary session the election for filling the open position would take place in the aforementioned School Body. (Minutes of the CMU - Uberaba City Council, 1896, Book 3, p. 203).

Decree nº 655 of 1893, cited in the document, regulated the organization of primary education in Minas Gerais, establishing the rules and procedures to be observed during the election of Municipal and District School Bodies. The Decree also established the terms and how it would work. According to the determinations from article 152 to article 154 of the mentioned decree, the school councils were in charge of different assignments: the inspection of public and private schools; the school census and organization of education statistics; the care related to students' attendance; to guarantee the fulfillment of the regulation; to organize the municipal school fund in order to help poor students; and act suggesting the creation of new schools or other measures that contribute to the development of education. (MINAS GERAIS, 1894, p. 451-455).

The existence of municipal and district school bodies, with specific assignments, indicates that there were, at the municipal level, norms and initiatives that aimed to organize public education. The City Councils were responsible for elaborating the normative principles that regulated the educational process. In addition, it demonstrates the decentralizing aspect of the educational organization instituted in the state, considering the importance given to local authorities when handling topics related to public education and their participation in the process of promotion and organization of education.

When analyzing the structure of the Uberaba legislature itself, with special care to the form of organization of the legislative work, based on the Commissions instituted by the City Council, it is possible to situate what were the goals and the spheres of action of the municipal authority. The Commissions were collegiate bodies composed by the city councilors, elected or appointed among themselves. Their purpose was to discuss and vote on proposed laws that were presented by the local leaders. They acted issuing opinions on the issues of their competence, before the matter was put to vote by the City Council. It is also important to note that in the analyzed legislatures (1895-1905), one often identifies the presence of a specific Commission to deal with issues related to public education, which denotes the importance assigned to the topic by the local political authority.

The municipal leaders showed great appreciation regarding public education. During the discussions held by the City Council, there are many moments in which its importance is exalted and its promotion is claimed. There is a part of a minute from 1898 in which one may perceive the value of education. In the Ordinary Session of July 4th, the city councilor Theophilo Vasconcellos registered a request to create a municipal school in a place called "Posto do Cemitério", District of *Dores do Campo Formoso*. Knowing that there was not any budget for public education, the city councilor requests that the future school be maintained with support of the "public assistance", and justifies such a request as described below:

The author of the above mentioned, demonstrated how useful it would be an educational institution in the mentioned place, considering these are villages in which children do not have the opportunity to study and, thus, they would be benefited. The author added that there is nothing greater than benefiting many children by spending the funds with education. The mentioned place is full of criminals, not only in

the state of Minas Gerais, but also in the surrounding state of São Paulo. Thus, it is of the utmost importance to interrupt such terrible behaviors and invest in education. (Minutes of the CMU - Uberaba City Council, 1898, Book 3, p. 266).

The public school, according to the city councilor, carries a social assistance character, as one can justify its inclusion in the “public assistance” budget. Education would be, metaphorically, the “fuel”, the civilizing element of society. In another moment, in the Legal Document of January 19th, 1903, there is a recommendation of city councilor Antônio Zeferino dos Santos:

claiming that the residents of *Fazenda da Cana Brava (Cana Brava Farm)*, District of *Conceição das Alagôas*, really needed a school to educate their children, since they were not able to do it due to lack of financial resources, which indicated that the bill offering the City Council’s consideration would be turned into law.” (Minutes of the CMU - Uberaba City Council, 1903, Book 4, p. 109).

Once again, school and education are represented as a “benefit”, of which the local population really need and did not have at their disposal. Thus, one may assign public education a character of political and social need. These considerations are, in a way, in accordance with aspects of the republican educational ideology.

School education was also valued by the local population, who from time to time interceded with the municipal government, requiring more opportunities for access to education through the creation of schools in the neighborhoods and districts, since the state was negligent and did not meet the increasing demand for primary education. As registered, in 1898, during the Minute of the Ordinary Session of May 5th: “A representation signed by several residents of the neighborhood known as *Lageado* was read, informing the City Council how much that neighborhood needs a co-education school.” (Minutes of the CMU - Uberaba City Council, 1898, Book 3, p. 264). In 1902, another representation, similar to the latter, was presented by the residents themselves:

Minute of the ordinary session on April 3rd, 1902. Legal Document. A representation was read and signed by twenty one residents of *Alto das Mercês*. As a school was needed for such an expanded neighborhood, the City Council demanded the creation of a primary school and introduced Simplicio Pinto da Silva, its new teacher. The Commission of Public Education obtained the order to issue its legal opinion. (Minutes of the CMU - Uberaba City Council, 1902, Book 4, p. 74).

During the session, on the following day, the project submitted by the residents of *Alto das Mercês*, after being analyzed by the Commission of Public Education, was immediately listened to. A primary school for male students was created in the aforementioned neighborhood. The Municipal Executive Agent was responsible and authorized to make credit operations if needed, in case there was no funding for the school. These records make it possible to realize how education was an idea appreciated and shared not only by the city councilors, but by part of the population as well, who was equally interested in disseminating public education.

## **Actions and proposals to the organization of public primary education in Uberaba.**

Regarding the actions carried out by the City Council of Uberaba in reference to education, according to the analysis of the documents, one may realize that the municipality will develop different types of initiatives, those related to attempts of the public authority to organize education in the city. The bills approved in the period are examples on this topic. One of the bills created the position of Municipal School Inspector:

Astolpho de Vasconcellos, a city councilor, presented a project on the creation of a Municipal School Inspector. The project was discussed, approved, and submitted to the Commission of Public Education. (...) After that, the Commission of Public Education issued its opinion approving and turning into law the bill regarding the creation of a Municipal School Inspector. (...) Minute of the ordinary session on November 27, 1896. In the third and last discussion of the day, it was discussed a bill about the creation of a Municipal School Inspector. It was voted and approved unanimously. (Minutes of the CMU - Uberaba City Council, 1896, Book 3, p. 218-218v.).

It is important to emphasize that in the following years of legislative work there is no record regarding the effectiveness of this law, not even any mention on activities developed or requirements made by the Municipal School Inspector. The proposition of the law demonstrates by itself a concern by the local authority in regards to the inspection of municipal education.

The inspection of education is once again discussed in 1912, when the City Council approves a new law creating a more organized municipal school inspection service, which also established what the Municipal School Inspector would do. According to the text of Law No. 270 of 1912, which created the position of Municipal School Inspector, this was about a position of trust of the Executive Agent, i.e., appointed by his nomination, the one who held these requirements:

Art. 3. The Municipal School Inspector is in charge of: a) Present to the City Council, at the end of each school visit, a detailed report related to the development of teaching, suggesting imperative actions to improve its conditions, and informing about the moral and intellectual capacity of each teacher; b) Visit, at least twice a year, the schools, staying as long as it is needed in each of them to assess their conditions; c) Inform the municipal government about everything they require in regards to the teachers and the municipal schools; d) Suggest the creation of new schools to the City Council wherever they believe it is more convenient and alert about convenient measures in benefit of the education; e) Verify the attendance of the teachers of the districts and the municipality seat; f) Open, number, initial and close the books of the municipal schools; g) Promote school statistics. (APU, 1912, Book of Laws of CMU - Uberaba City Council).

The law in question is very specific about the assignments of the Municipal School Inspector. It reveals that there was not only a concern of the municipal public authority in promoting and organizing education, increasing the offer of primary education, but also concerns regarding administrative and pedagogical aspects, such as: the conditions and the development of the teaching at municipal schools; aspects related to the inspection of teachers, and their capacities; and administrative aspects such as the attendance control, school statistics, and school record books. It is possible to state that the aforementioned law demonstrates one of the ways in which Uberaba, limited due to a context of decentralization of education, acted not only as an administrative authority, but also constituted itself as a “pedagogical municipality”.

The City Council was not only discussing education, but also engaging in promoting actions related to a better organization of the education. There were detailed and specific projects proposed and elaborated by the municipal authority, which indicated an interest in planning and organizing public education. In 1897, for example, during an Extraordinary Session dedicated to such purpose:

The distinguished President announced to the City Council a bill concerning the loan for purchasing a building where would be created public schools and a *Liceu de Artes e Officios* (School of Arts and Crafts - Lyceum) (Minutes of the CMU - Uberaba City Council, 1897, Book 3, p. 229).

According to the proposal, the City Council of Uberaba would take out a loan of 30 *contos de réis* (old Brazilian currency) in order to purchase a building for the following purpose: “Sole paragraph. This amount will be used for a building where several classes of this city will occur, and for the creation of a School of Arts and Crafts - Lyceum.” (Minutes of the CMU - Uberaba City Council, 1897, Book 3, p. 229).

The aforementioned law may be understood as an attempt of the local authority to bring order to the municipal public education. Having the municipal schools together and operating in the same building, destined exclusively and specifically for this purpose, the intention was to improve the material conditions of the schools maintained by the City Council, as well as a better use of public resources spent on them. Despite its proposition and approval, it was not found in the analyzed papers any record confirming the operating of this building or even the School of Arts and Crafts - Lyceum. Thus, one may believe that such measures translate into initiatives that were idealized but not materialized by the public authority.

In 1902 a similar bill was approved by the City Council, according to the Minutes of the Session taken place on July 07th:

The City Council of this city decrees: Art. 1º In the building where the Zootechnical Institute operated will be maintained, at the expense of the City Council, with interests guaranteed by the same Council, a Lyceum. Art. 2º In this Lyceum primary and secondary education will be taught, as well as notions of arts and crafts, among many others. (Minutes of the CMU - Uberaba City Council, 1902, Book 4, p. 84v.).

Annexed to the Lyceum, a “practical agriculture course” would be carried out. A “Zootechnical pasture” would also be maintained in order to provide zebu breeding animals “at affordable prices”, aiming the improvement of the herds of local breeders. The cost of the establishment would be funded by the municipality, according to art. 5º of the mentioned project. The teaching personnel would be hired and appointed by the City Council, according to art. 6º.

Thus, just as in the case of the School of Arts and Crafts - Lyceum, it is not possible from the papers to be aware of the operating of the Lyceum. There was actually another request made by a person, at the beginning of 1903, demanding the lease of the same building where the Zootechnical Institute operated<sup>2</sup>, which makes us believe that the proposal was also not fulfilled. See below:

Minutes of the ordinary session on January 08th, 1903. Agenda. Requirement from a citizen named João Naves da Cunha proposing to rent the building where the Zootechnical Institute and its premises operated, paying a monthly fee of two hundred thousand *réis* (old Brazilian currency), under the condition of using the pastures, the country, and firewood for selling (Minutes of the CMU - Uberaba City Council, 1903, Book 4, p. 106v.).

Although not all measures proposed became reality, their discussion and proposition by the City Council demonstrates the interest of the municipality in primary education, which means that it appeared, in this context, as a body of idealization and decision regarding education, characterizing, thus, an autonomous action of the municipality concerning public education.

The City Council also developed other actions in the field of education. It was common, for example, the assistance of the public authority to private education, even though it was much questioned. However, the interest was to expand or keep the opportunities of access to primary education, either public or private, state or municipal, denominational or secular.

Below is a requirement registered in the Minutes of the Ordinary Session of May 06th, 1903, in which a private person demands the assistance of the City Council for his school:

Requirement from Father Celedonio Mateo of S. José asking for assistance not lower than seven hundred thousand *réis*, which would be used to cover the costs with books and other supplies, in order to help poor students who attended the free classes, where he teaches one hundred and seven boys. (Minutes of the CMU - Uberaba City Council, 1903, Book 4, p. 122v).

The City Council approves the payment in the amount of five hundred thousand *réis* related to the request made by the school, which was denominational and private. During a session held on September 15th of the same year, a request is made by “Brother Gandulpho asking for the assistance of four *contos* in order to cover the costs the school has with sewage and water collection services.” (Minutes of the CMU - Uberaba City Council, 1903, Book 4, p. 129). The request, however, was denied by the City Council due to the following reason:

considers unfair the assistance of 1:500 000 to *Colégio Uberabense*, as it is a private establishment that obtains no small profits and does not provide free education to poor children, adding that the City Council should not provide sewage and water collection services to private establishments if the city does not offer such. (Minutes of the CMU - Uberaba City Council, 1903, Book 4, p. 136).

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<sup>2</sup>According to Lourenço (2010), the Zootechnical Institute of Uberaba was created in 1892, due to the initiative of the local elite of farmers, in order to train high-level technicians in the agricultural and zootechnical area. The author also highlights the vanguardism of the agrarian elite in Uberaba, since the institution was created before agricultural schools were created in Campinas, Piracicaba, and Lavras, and that the local technicians and breeders had two journals specialized in livestock and agriculture at their disposal. (p. 223-225).

Other initiatives demonstrate, however, the collaboration between municipal and state authorities in the development of public education. It has been mentioned that the actions taken by the state and by the municipality were complementary regarding the offering of primary education. The Municipal Law No 204 of 1907 indicates such, as the City Council authorized the supply of furniture to the state schools located in the districts of *Veríssimo*, *Dores do Campo Formoso*, and *Conceição das Alagoas* (APU, 1907). Law No 222, approved in 1908, must also be mentioned, as it made reference to the construction of a building where the city's Elementary School would operate, funded by municipal funds: "The Executive Agent is authorized to open up competition related to the construction of the building where the Elementary School projected by the State Government will operate in this city." (APU, 1908). Besides opening up to competition, the law also established in its article 3 that: "The costs with construction and land purchase will be on account of the budget known as Public Works." (APU, 1908). When the state government and the municipality collaborate, it demonstrates that the primary interest at that time was to expand the availability for primary education due to high demand.

### **Appointment and salary compensation for the teachers**

At that time the City Council was in charge of the appointments, transfers, and payment for the teachers of municipal schools. A bill approved by the city councilors in 1902 assigned to the City Council the exclusive responsibility in regards of appointing and dismissing municipal teachers. Here it is what was established in the bill, according to an Ordinary Session on November 06th, 1902:

Bill - The City Council and its city councilors decree: Art 1 - The appointment and termination of municipal teachers, both permanent and temporary, are exclusive responsibility of the City Council; Art 2 - Art 1 of municipal law No 9 of May 5th, 1893 and all provisions to the contrary are herewith revoked. (Minutes of the CMU - Uberaba City Council, 1902, Book 4, p. 102v.).

The City Council was responsible not only for hiring teachers, having established such competence in law, it was also in charge for the expenses related to the payment of teachers in municipal schools. In 1901, during the very first Ordinary Session of the year, held on January 11th, a bill was approved in regards to the payment of teachers. It was established in Art. 2 of such bill: "The Municipal Executive Agent is authorized to spend (hypothetical expense) up to the amount of two hundred thousand *réis* for the payment of salaries of municipal teachers." (Minutes of the CMU - Uberaba City Council, 1901, Book 4, p. 24-24v.). The City Council also deliberated on issues such as: approval of salary increases for teachers, leave of absence, and sick leave.

Another document available in the collection of the Public Archive of Uberaba contains a survey of the appointments of teachers made by the City Council where it is possible to note that the appointment of municipal teachers was formalized by "ordinances" published by the City Council. Thus, it is possible to conduct a survey of how many appointments were made from 1902 to 1912:

**Table 1** - Appointments and municipal teachers (1902-1912)

Year	Appointments of teachers by Ordinance
1902	07
1903	-
1904	-
1905	01
1906	02
1907	-
1908	03
1909	02
1910	16
1911	29
1912	46
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>

**Source:** Book of appointments of municipal teachers (APU, 1938).

After the law that made exclusive to the City Council the hiring of municipal teachers was proposed, 106 appointments were made by the municipality. It is important to note that these appointments are not related to 106 different teachers appointed by the City Council during this period. Sometimes the same teacher would be appointed many different times, in different years or even more than once in the same year. It means that there was an inconsistency in being a teacher, as they were appointed, dismissed or frequently transferred.

The indications and transfers of teachers from one school to another were also recurrent demands on the Agenda, which corresponded to another assignment of the City Council. An example can be seen in the minutes of the Ordinary Session of November 24, 1897: “Another indication was presented by the distinguished city councilors Antonio Silvério and Carlos Machado, as they indicated José d’Assis Junior to be the teacher of the school created on the *Fazenda das Alagoas (Alagoas Farm)*. The appointment for such would be the responsibility of the Municipal Executive Agent.” (Minutes of the CMU - Uberaba City Council, 1987, Book 3, p. 242). Another example occurred in 1902, as it is registered in the minutes that the City Council made appointments and transfers of teachers:

Minutes of the Ordinary Session on September 04th, 1902. (...) Mr. João Pimentel de Ulhôa, teacher of the *Pintos* school was transferred - erratum - it was Mr. Manoel de Almeida, teacher of the *Pintos* school, who was transferred, as requested, to the school

created in *Veadinho*, appointing to replace him temporarily, Mr. João Pimentel de Ulhôa; it was also appointed temporarily Mrs. Ambrolina Meirelles de Assumpção, to occupy the seat, i.e, the school created for *Alto do Fabrício* in this city. (Minutes of the CMU - Uberaba City Council, 1902, Book 4, p. 89v-90).

On January 25th, 1904, in Ordinary Session, the following topic is voted and deliberated by some of the city councilors: Benedicto Alves Moreira, who was a permanent teacher on *Fazenda da Baixa (Baixa Farm)*, requests the municipality a one-year sick leave upon presentation of a sick note stating the need of such. The request is submitted and approved unanimously by the City Council. Then, according to the papers, the appointment of José Pereira da Silva, indicated by one of the city councilors, is proposed in order to fill temporarily the position of teacher at the mentioned school. It was also unanimously approved. The City Council, as one can see, was in charge of the topics related to municipal teachers, due to the autonomy it held towards public education.

The municipal teachers also made their requests with the City Council, demanding, especially, salary raise, bonuses, or requesting late payments. The latter was apparently a constant situation due to the poor municipal financial conditions at that time. One example can be seen in the following request made by Joaquim Flavio de Lima, a municipal teacher: “Minute of the Ordinary Session held on July 04th, 1904. Request by Mr. Joaquim Flavio de Lima, municipal teacher in this city, requesting the payment related to four months.” (Minutes of the CMU - Uberaba City Council, 1904, Book 4, p. 155v.). Mr. de Lima requests the City Council the payment for his salary, which was past due over four months. Mr. de Lima had also made a request to the city councilors in other two opportunities, requiring a raise of his payments in 1902 and 1905. And last but not least, in regards to the requests made by teachers to the City Council, the minute of the Session on November 05th, 1899, states that:

A request made by Mrs. Laurinda Augusta de Moura was read. The requester is a teacher at the co-education school in this city and requests a bonus due to the overworking rendered at the aforementioned school, with an attendance of 59 students in November of the present year, who continuously attended the classes, as shown in the list. To the Finance Committee. (Minutes of the CMU - Uberaba City Council, 1899, Book 3, p. 291v-292).

After having received the request, the Finance Committee considered it reasonable and agreed to reward the requester with two hundred thousand *réis*, to be paid in the following administrative exercise. It is important to note that the same requester, Mrs. Laurinda Augusta de Moura, makes the same request due to overworking, in the years of 1900 and 1901.



From these examples it is possible to realize that the municipal teachers had to deal with sobre adversities, such as: late payments, overworking, low salary, considering that the requests for a raise were recurrent.

### **Financing of primary public education.**

Regarding this topic, in order to complement the analysis, some data may be taken into consideration related to the budget destined by the City Council for expenses with education. The *Almanach Uberabense* (Uberaba Almanac)<sup>3</sup> was a municipal journal from the early years of the Republic that, among many other topics, informed interested parties about the municipal public accounts. The journal published the budget approved by the City Council for the present year, detailing the amount of revenue invested and the destination of each quota.

When the municipal budget is analysed in the period from 1906 to 1911, except 1909, it is possible to note an increasing trend towards public spending with education. In percentage terms, in relation to the amount estimated of public spending, these are the following rates: 1906 - 2,84%, 1907 - 3,12%; 1908 - 3,68%; 1909 – 1,77%; 1910 - 3,90% and 1911 of 7,01% of the total budget of the City Council. The increase in municipal spending on school education shows how important is the role played by the municipal initiative in the process of organizing public education, which reinforces the conception that the municipality was concerned with public education making efforts to promote and organize municipal education.

In the period analyzed, 1909 is an exception, as the municipal budget destined to education was restricted to only 1,77% of the total budget, i.e, a considerable reduction if compared to previous years especially due to the increasing trend perceived at that time. However, such difference can be explained by the amount of public funds to which it was intended, in the same year, to pay for the construction of the Elementary School building. The investments of the City Council for public education were much lower in 1909, pretty much due to resources intended for the payment of the construction of the Elementary School building that would be created and maintained by the state government. From the data collected and used for reference, it was possible to formulate a comparative chart:

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<sup>3</sup>This is a local circulation journal. Its first issue was in 1895, but it only began to be published regularly in 1903. There were many topics on the journal: varieties, daily life, literature, and topics of public interest, not to mention the publishing of several advertisements. The present study considered the issues corresponding to the years from 1906 to 1911, as these are the ones with data related to the municipal budget.

**Table 2** - Budget of the Uberaba City Council (1906-1911)

<b>Municipal Budget *</b>	<b>1906</b>	<b>(%) of the Total</b>	<b>1907</b>	<b>(%) of the Total</b>	<b>1908</b>	<b>(%) of the Total</b>	<b>1909</b>	<b>(%) of the Total</b>	<b>1910</b>	<b>(%) of the Total</b>	<b>1911</b>	<b>(%) of the Total</b>
<b>Total of Budget</b>	155:000		141:000		168:500		175:000		200:000		210:000	
<b>Education</b>	<b>4:400</b>	<b>2,84%</b>	<b>4:400</b>	<b>3,12%</b>	<b>6:200</b>	<b>3,68%</b>	<b>3:100</b>	<b>1,77%</b>	<b>7:800</b>	<b>3,90%</b>	<b>14:720</b>	<b>7,01%</b>
<b>Public Employees</b>	25:000	16,13%	24:160	17,13%	21:860	12,97%	35:103	20,06%	29:960	14,98%	40:020	19,06%
<b>Public Works</b>	20:000	12,90%	12:960	9,19%	12:000	7,12%	14:000	8,00%	54:393	27,20%	23:405	11,15%
<b>Street Lighting</b>	32:000	20,65%	32:000	22,70%	32:000	18,99%	32:000	18,29%	32:200	16,10%	32:300	15,38%
<b>Elementary School Construction</b>	*	*	*	*	*	*	25:000	14,29%	13:500	6,75%	*	*

\* Amounts are expressed in *Contos de Réis* (currency used in the Brazilian republican period)

Source: *Almanach Uberabense* (1906 a 1911) (APU).

In order to talk about the increase in municipal investments on public education, it is needed, however, to analyze comparatively the amounts spent, to avoid a misunderstanding of this question. It is important to note, for example, that, despite the constant talk on valuing education, the public education did not receive the largest quota of the municipal budget.

Other types of expenses had the largest quota of public funds. The amount spent with civil service is an example of that, since the City Council spent much of its budget to pay several types of personnel in the civil service, such as: Secretary, Doorman, Prosecutor, Registrar, Engineer, Inspector, Administrator, Janitor, and also the Municipal Executive Agent. During the period analyzed, the expenses with personnel oscillated between 14,98% to 20,06% of the budget. These numbers are much higher than the numbers invested in public education, since they did not reach 10 percentage points.

There were also more investments in public works than in education, since it was spent more, in the years analyzed, with constructions and repairs of bridges, streets, and squares, than with education. In 1910, it was spent 27,20% of the entire municipal budget. It is worth mentioning that the amounts spent by the municipality for public lighting service had an average annual cost that also exceeded 20% of the budget in some years. Thus, it must be understood that, even though there is an increase in public spending with municipal education, the amounts intended for other expenses are not compatible with the education ideology of that time and the legislative proposals and actions.

Comparatively, one may mention the appointments of teachers, as it is possible to see that the increase of appointments follows the trend of more public spending on education. The municipality was appointing more teachers, because it had more funds to invest in public education and to pay the teachers. An example can be seen from the numbers in 1911. It was the year with more percentage in investment (7,01%) and also the second year with more appointments (29), as analyzed. The only year with more appointments was 1912 (46), but the budget data are not available for this year.

From the data collected from the municipality's public accounts, one must also consider another interesting aspect related to the splitting of the amount destined to urban and rural education. The budget was always equated like this: urban schools would receive the largest share of the public funds for a smaller number of schools to be maintained, which demonstrates a privilege of the urban schools in relation to the public authorities.

The data shown confirm some perspectives. For example, in the early years of the Republican period, Uberaba was going through a process of promoting and organizing public education, which can be seen due to the increasing amount of public funds destined to school education. It is necessary, however, to make a reservation that such topics need to be seen cautiously, owing to the fact that the references are solely budget forecasts. Thus, one can not affirm that these investments have really been made into the spread of education. It is possible, however, to recognize that the Republican interest and excitement for education were also true in Uberaba, and that the municipality was extremely important in the process of organizing public education.

## Creation of primary schools in the countryside and in the city

In educational terms, however, the actions that stand out the most in the legislative activity of the City Council are related to the creation, transfer, and extinction of schools. Such topics are discussed in the minutes of different sessions, as they are part of daily life. The number of schools created by the municipal authority represents the importance the politicians of Uberaba give to education, as a necessary condition for progress and civilization. During the legislatures considered for this research (1895-1905), the City Council created 14 rural schools and 10 urban schools, totaling 24 schools created in such period.

The records of the sessions show that the municipal schools were created where it was most needed, where more people would be benefited, i.e, children who were ready to study. The rural schools were built on farm sites or in a rural populated area. The urban schools were created in the most populated neighborhoods, or in the seat of the district part of the municipality.

In regards to the typology, there was more than one type of municipal school and they were different according to the type of students. They were classified as: primary school for boys; primary school for girls; and co-education schools (for both genders). The type of school was not always informed in the records of creation, but it is possible to note a prevalence for male education, according to a good part of the actions of the City Council. A female school was, usually, only created after having a male school in the same area.

In regards to the co-education schools, the reason for them was serving a larger number of students, which required less resources. This type of school was also preferred by the public authorities to the detriment of female schools. In 1895, for example, even after its approval, there was a change in the creation of a school in the district of *Dores do Campo Formoso* that intended to be female, but in the third and last discussion of the project the following was proposed: “in regards to the creation of a co-education school in the district of *Dores do Campo Formoso*, unanimously approved, there is one change to be made: instead of being a female school, it will be a co-education school.” (Minutes of the CMU - Uberaba City Council, 1895, Book 3, p. 195-195v). This way, it was possible to serve more students, of both genders, with the creation of only one primary school.

The data surveyed show the creation of a considerable number of schools in the period analyzed. However, based only on the records of the sessions of the City Council it is not possible to affirm if these schools actually operated, or for how long they were active. The limitations of the City Council with budget probably interrupted the creations of such schools, constituting a difficulty in their maintenance by the public authorities. Such limitation was often mentioned in the minutes when the schools were created. In the laws related to the creation of the schools it was possible to see, once in a while, reservations like these: “In the lack of funds, the Municipal Executive Agent is authorized to make credit operations if needed for the costs with the school”. (Minutes of the CMU - Uberaba City Council, 1902, Book 4, p. 74).

The type of schools created were also of short duration, according to the minutes. The public authorities frequently transferred or extinction of classes. The transfers occurred due to several reasons, but, above all, aiming to allow not only more students, but also a higher attendance. In regards to the extinction of schools, those that did not meet the

minimum regular attendance would be affected. The City Council carried out, from 1895 to 1905, a total of 9 transfers, and 3 extinction of schools. The justification for these changes was similar to the following content collected on the Minutes of the Ordinary Session of November 07th, 1895, when:

The distinguished city councilor of the district of *Dores do Campo Formoso*, Joaquim Lopes da Silva, requested transfer of the co-education school located on the *Fazenda da Jacauba (Jacauba Farm)* to the *Fazenda da Felicidade (Felicidade Farm)* in the same district, considering to be more convenient as there are more students in the latter. It was voted and approved. (Minutes of the CMU - Uberaba City Council, 1895, Book 3, p. 198).

Just as in the case of transfers, the suppression of schools also took into account the attendance of students, and the more adequate areas where the schools would be created. During a Session on September 14th, 1896, it was presented “a bill extinguishing the following municipal schools: the night school in this city and the rural school of *Fazenda dos Corrêas (Corrêas Farm)*, since they have not had regular attendance”. (Minutes of the CMU - Uberaba City Council, 1896, Book 3, p. 216v.). The lack of regular students was the reason for extinguishing the school.

In a deeper analysis, there are other questions for discussion. It is important to note that the actions of the City Council focused on the diffusion of teaching and provision of primary education in the rural areas of the municipality. It was created, in the rural areas, from 1895 to 1905, more schools (14) than urban schools in the same period (10). Other than that, there was more constancy in the municipal actions in regards to creating rural schools, with 7 of them created in the first five years (1895-1900), and other 7 schools in the following five years (1900-1905), which shows that organizing and promoting education in rural areas was one of the concerns of the municipal public authority at that time.

It does not mean that public education in the urban area was not considered by the local leaders. On the contrary, the local authority had a concern about the urban schools, as it can be seen from the considerable number of 10 urban schools created in the period. However, the actions for creating such urban schools mainly occurred from 1901 to 1905. In the first five years of legislative activity here analyzed (1895-1900), the City Council created only 3 urban schools, and 7 rural schools, in the same period.

It means that, at least at the beginning, it was a priority of the City Council to promote education in rural areas, as the actions of the state government did not supply the increasing demand for primary education. The other 7 urban schools were created in the following years, possibly due to the urban growth, which also required a greater demand for primary education that could not be met by the actions of the state government alone.

Finally, another aspect that must be highlighted is related to the transitivity and inconsistency of rural schools, when compared to the greater stability of urban schools. All school transfers (9) carried out by the City Council are related to rural schools. Other than that, one of the three schools extinguished by the City Council, only one of them was an urban school. This can be explained by the peculiarity of the rural schools, such as: where they

would operate, usually on farms, in premises provided by the owner; political issues as the favoring of local oligarchs; or issues related to students attendance. These were all reasons that contributed to the inconsistency and transitivity of rural schools, which made the transfer of a rural school a recurrent situation in the minutes of the City Council.

### Final considerations

In general terms, it may be highlighted that the educational action of the Uberaba City Council, in the early years of the Republic, was carried out in different ways. The local authority proposed and carried out different initiatives in regards to promoting and organizing public education. Not all of them actually happened, i.e, they are considered unfulfilled actions. However, it is important to note that the existence itself of these actions and propositions confirms that there was a concern of the municipality with education.

The Commission of Public Education constituted by the City Council and School Councils, the municipal and district ones, local bodies essentially linked to education, are the first indication in the sense that the municipality had an interest for education and made efforts to organize public education. The City Council acted, for example, establishing personnel for inspection of the municipal education, creating and maintaining a considerable number of municipal schools, and hiring and paying the teachers of these schools.

By analyzing the municipal papers it is possible to confirm the hypothesis first outlined: the City Council of Uberaba made efforts in order to organize public education. The City Council was interested in expanding the offer of primary education, due to the increasing demand for education. In this context, education was valued and exalted by local leaders who, pursuing the republican educational ideals, assigned to it a quality of civility, an element of progress and renewal of society.

It is also notable that municipal education had its own features, i.e, a particularity towards other surrounding municipalities, as demonstrated by Gonçalves Neto e Carvalho<sup>4</sup>. Featuring, according to Magalhães (2015), “a particular educational offer”. In the early years of the Republic, the municipality of Uberaba acted composing its own way of organizing and administering public education, confirming, thus, the understanding that presumes the municipality not only as a political and administrative entity, but as a body of decision, idealization, and accomplishment when respect to public education: as a “pedagogical municipality” (MAGALHÃES. 2015).

Inserted in a context of political-administrative decentralization and accountability of the local body, the municipality of Uberaba, at the beginning of the Republic would constitute itself as a “pedagogical municipality”, organizing public education in their jurisdiction. Thus,

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<sup>4</sup> There are many different studies carried out by the authors in regards to understanding the educational reality of the state of Minas Gerais, in which act the municipalities and the decentralizing legislation of education, which revealed the other phases of the constitution of the public education system in Minas Gerais, in its multidimensionalities, as well as for analyses in the macrostructural field. Cf. CARVALHO, Luciana Beatriz de Oliveira Bar de & CARVALHO, Carlos Henrique de. **O lugar da educação na modernidade luso-brasileira no fim do Século XIX e início do XX**. Campinas, SP: Alínea, 2012; GONÇALVES NETO, Wenceslau; CARVALHO, Carlos Henrique de. (Orgs.) **O Município e a Educação no Brasil: Minas Gerais na primeira república**. Campinas, S.P.: Alínea, 2012. GONÇALVES NETO; Wenceslau; CARVALHO, Carlos Henrique de. (Orgs.) **Ação Municipal e Educação na Primeira República no Brasil**. Belo Horizonte: Mazza Edições, 2015.

it is possible to affirm that this is a period where many actions were proposed and/or fulfilled by the City Council in order to promote education.

At the end of the current study, and from the analysis of local particularities, it was possible to establish relations with wider historical-educational processes, and assist in the understanding about the educational reality of the early years of the republican period in Brazil. The intention of the current study is not to exhaust the discussions on the topic, but to contribute with the historiography of education in order to broaden the knowledge about the role played by the municipalities in the process of organizing public education as observed at the beginning of the Republic.

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