
Brazil Ministry Requests Schools to Recite Nationalist Slogans

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Teachers were asked to read Bolsonaro's slogan, "Brazil before everything. God above everyone," to classes as part of a message from the Ministry of Education.

Brazil's far-right government requested that schools record students reciting the national anthem before the flag and for faculty to make students read nationalist slogans aloud.

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Education Minister Ricardo Velez Rodriguez sent an email Monday to schools requesting that teachers submit their videos to the ministry after the first day of classes, according to a ministry statement.

They also requested that students be made to read nationalist messages based on President Jair Bolsonaro's 2018 campaign slogan: "Brazil above everything, God above everyone."

"Brazilians! Let us greet new times in Brazil and celebrate responsible and quality education being developed in our schools by teachers, for the benefits of you, the students, who constitute the new generation," read the message to be shared with students.

"I realized the mistake," Velez Rodriguez said Tuesday, a day after the education ministry emailed his instructions and stoked outrage. There had been no request for parental consent for the act of filming children in the classroom.

Educators and lawyers criticized Rodriguez's move Tuesday and began a Federal Prosecutor's Office of Citizens' Rights investigation into the constitutionality of the administrative act.

The prosecutor, who is part of the Federal Public Prosecutor's Office, reported that he made a "request for clarification" to the minister, and asked Velez Rodríguez to file a claim of justification within 24 hours, which is not obligatory though it does put the investigation into motion.

When it comes to education, Brazil faces a crumbling infrastructure, a shortage of teachers, and high levels of illiteracy. In 2014, Brazil's literacy rate hovered around 92 percent.

"This is unreal. Schools are overburdened with work, still matriculating students, thousands of problems, and we are going to stop and do this?" said Rosana Lima, assistant head teacher in Rio de Janeiro, [The Guardian](#) reported. "You are doing government propaganda."

Bolsonaro has vowed to eliminate perceived leftist influence in schools, including sex education and political debate, after Workers' Party rule in 13 of the last 15 years.

Activists and NGOs have been concerned about growing authoritarianism under Bolsonaro, who has openly praised the country's 1964-85 dictatorship.
