

Brazilian Highschoolers to Get Free Textbooks

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In the past, the Brazilian government has distributed millions of textbooks to elementary school students throughout the country. This year, following a pilot project begun in 2004, high school students will also be getting Portuguese and mathematics textbooks free of charge.

Thus, 15.5 million high school textbooks are now being distributed in 13,253 schools at an estimated cost of US\$ 63.7 million (135 million reais)

Minister of Education, Fernando Haddad, points out that the textbooks being distributed have been approved by university professors and are of high quality.

A good textbook is an essential part of the learning process, says the Minister, and adds that they are so expensive many families cannot afford them.

"Our data shows that most of the students in public high schools come from low-income families. There is no reason not to extend the government's free textbook program to them," declared the Minister.

The Ministry of Education says it hopes to be distributing free textbooks for physics, chemistry and biology by the year 2007.

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