



Latin America
Basic Education
Summit

2001

E X E C U T I V E S U M M A R Y



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Latin America Basic Education Summit



The Conference Center of the Americas
at the Biltmore hotel
Miami, Florida / March 7-8, 2001

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A Message From the Summit Advisors and Sponsors



Donn B. Atkins and Nicanor Restrepo

On March 7 – 8, 2001, more than 120 business, education, and government leaders met in Miami for the Latin America Basic Education Summit (LABES) to discuss joining forces to accelerate reform of basic education in Latin America. This groundbreaking conversation generated consensus on the importance of quality education for Latin America's future and ignited a sense of urgency to step up reform of basic education in a collaborative effort.

We are pleased to share with you some highlights of the meeting and the unanimously approved **Action Statement**, a guidepost for business, government and education leaders to develop plans of action to be implemented over the next 24 months. We have also published separately our briefing book on key reform issues—including educational standards, accountability, and quality teacher training.

Please join us as we double our collection efforts at the country level to ensure that all children and teachers have the opportunity to achieve. Now is the time to act.

Donn B. Atkins
General Manager
IBM Latin America

Nicanor Restrepo
President
Suramericana de Inversiones

On behalf of the LABES Advisory and Planning Committees.



From left to right, top to bottom:

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Federação das Indústrias do
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Gustavo Roosen
CANTV, Venezuela

John Mein, American Chamber
of Commerce, Brazil

*“Teaching should be
treated as a serious
profession. Expectations
should be high, training
should be rigorous and
those who perform well
should be compensated
appropriately.”*



**Action Statement,
2001 Latin American
Basic Education Summit**



“We have done a lot in terms of extending basic education in our societies, but we have not done enough to improve the quality of this education.”

Enrique Iglesias,
President, Inter-American
Development Bank



Ratified Action Statement

Latin America Basic Education Summit – Miami – March 8, 2001

Nothing is more important to the economic and social progress of Latin America than the education of its youth. A well-educated and informed population is crucial for a thriving democracy, strong communities, individual growth and achievement, as well as sustained economic growth and rapid development. Open economies and access to global markets have expanded the opportunity and demand for world-class workers who can adapt to changing conditions and new technologies. Education is our most effective tool for reducing the gap between rich and poor.

To ensure that every child has an equal opportunity to become a responsible, contributing citizen and to participate successfully in the global society, improving the quality of basic education is paramount. The region's future depends upon every child being able to reach his or her highest potential and upon reducing the wide knowledge and skill gap within the population. Parents have the primary responsibility for making decisions about their children's education.

Governments are responsible for guaranteeing their citizens access to high quality education and calling on all sectors of society, both public and private, to ensure adequate provision and quality. Business leaders understand that companies can be successful, and the countries of the region can be economically viable, only if there is a highly skilled workforce.

We applaud and are encouraged by the progress made in the region over the past few years in providing access to schooling, expanding enrollment, and improving the quality of teaching and learning in public schools. Yet, we believe it is possible—and there is an urgent need—to accelerate this transformation by collaborating, jointly leading, and leveraging technology in all its forms.

Why we have come together

As government, education, and business leaders, and as parents, we all have a stake in the quality and performance of schools in Latin America. We acknowledge the progress under way, but also are eager to speed the pace of improvement. We recognize the differences among countries and between urban and rural areas. But we believe that our countries face many common issues and can benefit greatly by sharing experiences. We are united by our passion to see countries in Latin America become world-class competitors, and we are convinced that this requires keeping students in school, challenging them to perform at higher academic levels, to demonstrate a mastery of basic skills, and to think creatively, analyzing problems, proposing solutions, communicating fluently, working collaboratively, adroitly managing resources such as time and material, and utilizing technology. Setting goals to achieve these results is not enough. Our joint leadership is imperative for long-term success. By working together the business community can help governments initiate and sustain effective education reforms. Students, parents, post-secondary education institutions, and employers are all stakeholders and have a role to play. Investing in our children is an investment in the future of Latin American countries, and it requires concrete actions.

What we believe

There are many challenges to be met in order to transform basic education school systems in Latin America. However, we believe we must build upon the successes and momentum currently underway to accelerate the pace of change. We can significantly improve teaching, learning, and, most importantly, student performance by:

1. Establishing high standards, carefully measuring progress, and communicating broadly to all stakeholders:
 - high academic standards that clearly define what children should know and be able to do at each grade level;
 - solutions to help all students reach their full potential, matched against the goals;
 - testing systems that accurately measure student progress and a system to disseminate the results school-by-school and student-by-student, promptly and widely; and
 - a progress report that includes benchmarking in order to stimulate the collaborative effort among government, education, parents, business, and other stakeholders and that provides continuous progress improvement.

Standards should be debated and agreed upon in a process that includes governments, education leaders, the business community, politicians and, in particular, parents and teachers. An action plan should be developed with target dates to indicate when standards can be expected to be fully implemented. School leaders and local communities should be able to manage teaching and learning against these goals and plans.

WE BELIEVE THE USE OF STANDARDS WILL:

- help all students learn more by demanding higher student proficiency;
- reduce the achievement gap by requiring support for those who do not meet the standard;
- focus education systems on understandable, objective, measurable, and well defined goals;
- reinforce the best teaching and educational practices already found in classrooms and make them the norm; and
- establish accountability by focusing on results and by helping educators evaluate which programs work best.

Benchmarking nationally, regionally, and globally should become a common and public practice. The results will allow us to identify and replicate best practices and focus attention and resources where improvement is necessary. This requires current, reliable data and valid measures.

2. Helping teachers become proficient leaders in a standards-based learning environment. To do so, it is necessary to energize the teaching profession by establishing high standards, better and continuous training and mentoring, performance evaluations, and merit pay. Teaching should be treated as a serious profession. Expectations should be high, training should be rigorous and those who perform well should be compensated appropriately. While money alone is not the answer, teachers should receive competitive compensation. Teachers should play a central role in decisions on curricula, materials, and strategies for teacher training program. All of these actions are central to raising the status of teaching as a profession.

3. While not a silver bullet, technology is one important and helpful tool. Applied thoughtfully and well integrated into a curriculum, technology can be a useful tool to assist student learning, and provide access to valuable information. It can serve also to facilitate teacher training and professional development in the sharing of best practices and collaborative teaching methods. Technology can be employed by trained educators in classrooms and by other professionals in libraries, museums, at home, etc. to provide a competitive edge in today's workplace. We cannot reach higher standards without developing new and creative approaches and strategies to help students work at their own pace as well as to aid teachers and parents.

WE BELIEVE NEW USES OF TECHNOLOGIES IN EDUCATION WILL:

- substantially improve access to the best instructional methods and materials for all students and teachers;
- provide students with hands-on experience to develop the knowledge and skills they need to compete successfully in the workplace;
- find and reinforce the best uses of technology that are already found in schools and in teacher training and make them the norm;
- offer teachers access to specialized support, collegial relationships, and professional development in order to increase their effectiveness with students;
- provide new ways for students to work at their own pace;
- facilitate parent-teacher communication; and
- make available information on best practices and their results by facilitating dissemination and replication.

What we commit to do

We agree that there is an urgent need to pick up the pace of basic education reform in Latin America. We recognize that at the core of this reform are quality education for all, academic standards and accountability, quality teacher training to improve student performance, and the full use of technology as a tool to achieve these goals.

WE OFFER OUR STRONG AND NONPOLITICAL SUPPORT TO:

- setting clear academic standards that serve as guidelines for what students need to know and be able to do at each grade level in core subjects and phase them in after an appropriate transitional period;
- establishing independent evaluation and benchmarking against these standards;
- providing teachers with increased access to training and professional development in order to facilitate quality teaching;
- strengthening efforts to measure student progress toward meeting these standards,
- giving school directors, teachers, and local communities more authority and responsibility in managing schools;
- holding school directors, teachers, and students accountable for demonstrating real improvement;
- seizing every opportunity to provide public support for those who raise the mantle of standards-based reform that focuses on accountability and teacher training;
- being visible and vocal leaders for high-academic standards based reform;

- helping facilitate the sharing of best practices and web-based technology solutions that address improving teacher training and high academic standards;
- rallying additional sector leaders, including the media, to support these goals;
- implementing plans for individual countries and business-education partnerships for innovation, research, and development;
- recognizing and rewarding excellence against this agenda; and
- reviewing our progress on a regional basis annually.

What specific actions will we take?

Upon leaving the Summit, we commit to the following steps to initiate and/or accelerate our efforts to improve student achievement:

IMMEDIATE NEXT STEPS

- ◆ **Raising awareness.** As government, education, and business leaders, we commit to return to our respective countries and immediately begin work to educate the public and media on the importance and need to accelerate basic education reform and to make substantial progress on academic standards, quality teacher training, and the full utilization of technology as a tool.

While the specific actions will be different in each country, based upon the successful work already under way, government and business leaders will engage in a wide variety of activities to achieve the goals stated above. To the extent necessary, such activities may include: press interviews; editorials; town meetings to build public support and engage parents and communities; reaching out to governors, ministers, secretaries of education, and other business leaders and employees to support and adopt effective practices to improve achievement and look for opportunities to work together; arranging for teaching professionals to visit businesses in order to help them develop a better understanding of the needs of employers; organizing country-, state-, and province-level Education Summits to design specific plans for developing and implementing standards and assessments at the local level where possible.

- ◆ **Implementing high academic standards.** Many countries have made significant progress in establishing academic standards. Business leaders agree to make standards a top priority individually, and within their professional and business associations, and agree to meet regularly with their ministers of education, governors, and secretaries of education to discuss progress and how to collaborate most effectively.
- ◆ **Public reporting, information sharing, and accountability.** As government, business, and education leaders, we want to hold ourselves accountable for progress made in Latin America toward improving student achievement in core subject areas. The Summit Planning Committee and Advisory Committee will, within 90 days, propose an annual regional report card designed to meet our collective stated objectives and goals. We will also recommend a plan for technical assistance to develop and implement high quality, truly world-class standards and assessments, and a web-based strategy to share best practices and other relevant information. Also, where appropriate and useful, on a voluntary basis, we commit to working together to pool information resources and expertise in order to move forward on this agenda.

WITHIN 12 MONTHS

- ◆ **Public support for reform.** Business leaders commit—individually and through business coalitions—to actively support efforts by local, state, national, and regional leaders to strengthen standards, assessments, accountability and benchmarking so that results can be published and shared on a timely and regular basis. We will work collaboratively with government, education, and labor leaders to establish sound reform policies and to sustain them over time.
- ◆ **Business practices aligned.** We will clearly communicate to students, parents, schools, and the community the types and levels of skills necessary to meet the workforce needs of the 21st century. We will implement initial-hiring practices within one year that will require applicants to demonstrate academic achievement through school-based records, such as academic transcripts, achievements in external testing systems, diplomas, portfolios, certificates of initial mastery, or others as appropriate. We will promote continuous learning among our employees and agree to adopt policies to support parental involvement in their children’s education and in improving their local school.

We will work diligently to help educators remove the barriers that impede access to and the effective use of technology. We will partner with schools on quality professional development and curriculum content projects.

- ◆ **Strengthening the teaching profession.** Business leaders will support government efforts to improve teacher training, raise standards, provide competitive compensation, and provide incentives for quality teaching. We will publicly recognize excellence in teaching and promote the status of the profession.
- ◆ **Implementation plans.** We will develop implementation plans for this agenda and tailor them to the specific needs of each country. These may include innovative projects, policy initiatives, and public awareness activities. Plans will include objectives to be met within 12 months. We will share ideas and best practices throughout the region.
- ◆ **Reading proficiency for all.** Education leaders, with the support of government leaders, will launch a region wide effort to ensure that virtually all school age children stay in school and learn to read well in their official language during the first 3 years of school.
- ◆ **Awards and recognition.** The Summit Planning Committee will host a regional awards program to recognize outstanding teachers, students, school managers, and collaborating teams that have made extraordinary progress toward this agenda.

We believe that together we can make a difference.

TRANSCRIPT OF SPEECH

Enrique Iglesias

President, Inter-American Development Bank

*Latin America Basic Education Summit – Miami – March 7, 2001
(Video Recording)*

Good morning, I am very happy to get in touch with you in this way. I am very sorry that I could not be present on this occasion at the summit. It so happens that it takes place just in the middle of the month in which we have our annual meeting in Santiago, Chile, and we have a lot of things to do, so I am really very sorry not to be able to attend ...a summit which basically has a very, very important objective, which is to put together distinguished leaders from the business community—both national and international—working in Latin America, distinguished members of government, academicians, experts just to work for a noble cause, which is the improvement of education in Latin America.

Education has always been a central piece in any development effort. We were used, in Latin America, for many years to claim that we were used to defending youth because we knew that behind a better education we could have a better social development, a better access to the possibilities of improving the life of people in the region, and, particularly, we always tried to defend this idea and this objective because it was the only way in which we can really break the vicious cycle of poverty, which is so widespread in the region—the only way to finish with this repressive type of poverty that still prevails in our region. Education was by far the most important instrument that we could use.

Now, this is strong evidence of the social and, I would say, ethical justification for working for better education. We have now the economic dimensions—economic dimensions that stem from the globalization process, the need for competition in our countries, and the need, at

the same time, to extend this competition, this competitiveness, not only to the big enterprises, but also to the small and medium firms, which are the biggest majority of entities in the region. And then the idea is no longer to have a sufficient team of highly educated superstars running big firms. We need education to reach more and more the levels of medium and small enterprises, so that we have an expanded sustainability of our economic process, reaching with highly-educated people to all levels of our productive sector.

Recent statistical studies have shown a high correlation between education and growth, particularly in the secondary levels. And it has become much harder to grow without education. This is a fact. And the more we become integrated in the world economy, the more we are under pressure to increase our competitiveness, the more we need to have education of higher quality than we have today. And I insist the question is not only quantity, it's quality.

We have done a lot in terms of extending basic education in our societies, but we have not done enough to improve the quality of this education. And this is very much the issue which is at stake now: how to accompany these efforts of quantity with the efforts of quality in the way we have education in our societies.

This conference, let me tell you, is a little bit of music to my ears. If big firms want to support education, this is the best way, the best news that we have in our institution, which has been, for years, committed to supporting education in Latin America. If you all—the big companies—take seriously the challenge, it can be perhaps a kind of secret weapon that can

change the overall picture of development in our region.

The firms represented here have hired the best minds and reflect the best management traditions in the world. If they earnestly apply these formidable weapons to fight for education, this is, for sure, good news. In the past, they have been hiring in Latin America, year after year, employees with bad education. By sponsoring this conference, they are telling us that they are unhappy with the situation and want to do something about it. If big prestigious firms embark on a movement to improve education, others may follow.

There are many ways business can help, but—above all—what is expected of them is not charity, it is not generosity. We expect them to act in their own enlightened self-interest. Improving education is good for them, and it is good for the people and countries themselves. If they pursue their self-interest but keep a long-run perspective, they cannot help but conclude that supporting education is good for them. This conference is evidence that they have reached this conclusion, and I am very happy to hear that, and to be a witness to that.

There are many ways in which you can help, and we should join you in that endeavor. One, of course, is political activism. It's a key strategy. Competent firms know how to fight for their interests and we would like to see them deploying these skills for the benefit of a very noble cause, which is education.

Professor Hirschman who knows Latin America very well, incidentally, used to talk about “voice” and “exit” as strategies to push one's interests. “Exit” is voting with one's feet. It is when one goes somewhere else to get what one wants. But in matters of national education, “exit” is not a given. It is the entire system of education that requires repair, and I insist—the entire system. We must concentrate on basic education, we must look very seriously at secondary education, and also we must look at the whole question of higher education because

it is a system to which we are applying our efforts—not only one sector, although the beginning is to have basic education of a quantity and quality needed to keep our countries in the best competitive situation in the world.

Therefore, “voice” is the only strategy that must be used in this political strategy. It means to complain, to complain, and to complain, and this is something that finally will be heard. But business can also take education initiatives. In Brazil, for example, half a million students attend Telecurso, an educational television program paid for by an association of industrialists and developed by a private TV conglomerate. Venezuelan entrepreneurs are also moving into TV education. Bradesco, in Brazil, also has one hundred thousand students in their foundation schools—one hundred thousand students. Colombia has also many examples of intelligent philanthropy. Another large contracting firm has created a very intriguing campaign before the elections. TV and magazines repeated the following slogan: “If your candidate does not know how to change education, change the candidate.” That's not bad; it's a very good slogan.

In the United States, the same organizers of this conference created a significant impact on education when they started telling prospective employees that education matters. They created a policy to check the grades of students before hiring—simple, inexpensive, but it sends a message to the system.

I am very happy to see that this summit is taking place, and I hope to be present at the next summits, because really we are concentrating the efforts on the real pillar that will be the basis for our economic progress and for our social development. So, good luck, congratulations on this initiative and, of course, both personally and as a bank, we would like very much to be close to your endeavors and to support them.

Thank you.

TRANSCRIPT OF OPENING ADDRESS

Gustavo Bell Lemus

Vice President and Minister of Defense, Colombia

Latin America Basic Education Summit – Miami – March 7, 2001

First and foremost, I would like to express my gratitude to the organizers for their kind invitation to say a few words at the opening session of this summit of Latin America's business leaders. It is truly an honor to be able to address the distinguished men and women who work daily to promote progress, well-being, stronger citizenship, and modernization among our countries.

A summit bringing together representatives from both business and government is an apt occasion to reflect upon one of the region's most pressing issues and to offer concrete solutions. Let me begin by saying that it is now clear to all that no single sector can bring about on its own the changes required to improve the quality of education in our schools.

As successful business leaders, in order to stay competitive you must make strategic decisions on almost a daily basis. You also know the issues of worker skills and training from up close. The very fact that people such as you are concerned about primary education guarantees that this meeting will produce concrete, efficient plans.

In light of the summits that have preceded this event, the many fora that have taken place in recent years on the role of primary education in development, and the increasingly important role of business in bringing about the innovations that enrich the learning process, I do not doubt that the conditions are now there for business and government to begin to share full responsibility for education.

It is indeed a happy occasion when education and business leaders from throughout Latin

America and the United States come together with a common objective: committing to a reform process designed to improve the quality and equity of education in the region. I am very pleased to be able to offer my support to this endeavor, as I remain convinced that education and culture are more essential than ever to the sustainable development and progress of nations.

I am also convinced that underdevelopment is a cultural, rather than an economic, problem stemming from the lack of education of our people, and that business and government working together can set the stage for a new, more hopeful scenario such as that which was advanced by the Secretary General of the United Nations when he proposed the establishment of the Global Compact. Our countries must implement without delay the recommendations so many experts have proposed for so many years but without success in Latin America due to lack of decision, lack of policy continuity, lack of resources, or plain lack of interest and commitment from the various social actors.

The briefing book prepared by PREAL is undoubtedly a good policy paper. It recognizes that many strides have been made in the realm of primary education in Latin America, notably government efforts to improve coverage and increase spending on education. Yet, such progress is found wanting when measured against the challenges posed by globalization in the new millennium. In fact, the quality of Latin American education still leaves too much to be desired and still falls well short of today's standards.

Thus, I believe that the question of quality in education should be our leading concern. We all agree that full coverage of compulsory primary education is a goal we must strive to achieve, but this cannot be done without consideration of quality. And when speaking of quality, one refers to the ability of the educational system to shape individuals who are competent both as citizens and as employees.

As far back as 1993, a joint ECLAC-UNESCO report made it clear that these goals are not separate or contradictory. Reading skills, oral and written communication abilities, and the capacity to do basic math, to solve problems, and to work as a team are all essential for performing well in life both as a citizen and as a worker. These ideas, first raised in the 1990 Jomtien Declaration on Education for All, were ratified a decade later in Dakar.

Thus, this summit on primary education in Latin America ought to be regarded as a major step toward a better understanding of public and private responsibilities. It should also strongly embrace the myriad expert recommendations on how to improve education in the region. The Action Statement approved at the World Education Forum in April 2000 in Dakar reiterated the commitment of nations the world over to achieve compulsory primary education of good quality.

The Dakar agreement, which includes of course our own promise of quality in education, asserted that “all children, young people, and adults have the human right to benefit from an education that will meet their basic learning needs in the best and fullest sense of the term, an education that includes learning to know, to do, to live together and to be. It is an education geared to tapping each individual’s talents and potential, and developing learners’ personalities, so that they can improve their lives and transform their societies.”

There is nearly universal consensus on this statement, now a mandatory topic for discussion at all international fora attempting

to chart the future of humankind. In 2000, for example, the Hanover Global Dialogue on Sustainable Development—where “the kind of society we want going into the 21st century” was discussed—identified education as a key factor in getting us closer to that ideal and added that “tomorrow’s successful societies will be those prepared to unleash the potential of their people—their knowledge, understanding, imagination, creativity and wisdom—and apply it to improving their living conditions and quality of life”.

These succinct ideas may serve to shed light on the dialogue about to take place. The introduction to the briefing book states that “education is the key” to development, and adds that “quality education makes business sense and helps workers become more flexible, better able to learn on the job, and more qualified to make decisions”.

Unfortunately, the shortcomings of our educational system result in few students being able to acquire the problem-solving and decision-making skills they need. These flaws are apparent in all of our countries and demand a serious look at what our schools teach, and how.

I believe you will all agree that the urgency of having business and government tackle this issue in a concerted manner has been amply illustrated, and that the time has come to stop the rhetoric and take action. There is no time to waste; we need educational excellence and lifelong education for all, and we need them now. We need to create new opportunities, and sustain them over time.

Faced with such challenges, calling upon the private sector could hardly be a more timely undertaking. While much of what ails our educational systems demands a resolute government commitment to investing in education and setting up an efficient institutional framework, government cannot do it alone. Private sector involvement in helping define and monitor policy is essential if education is

to meet quality and relevance requirements and effectively contribute to growth and development.

This new role may take a number of forms, including:

1. Formal involvement in defining curricular contents and standards, including the basic skills and training required for entry into the labor market. Initiatives helping define minimum labor force requirements, such as implemented by SCANS in the United States and the Conference Board in Canada, are clear signals as to what the private sector needs from primary education and what should be replicated in the region. These standards, coupled with a regular student assessment system, may provide the basis for an educational system which is accountable to the various groups and actors involved.
2. Private sector recognition of these skills when making personnel decisions. Degrees do not prove what people can do. We must move toward skill certification based on assessment systems capable of determining whether primary education graduates and job seekers actually possess a particular skill. Certification will gain acceptance if recognized by business.
3. Private sector involvement in institutional development. Education reforms implemented in most countries have granted schools greater autonomy, yet systemic weaknesses threaten to jeopardize achievements in this respect. Overcoming this problem are initiatives undertaken by businesses and industry associations to introduce management styles and practices in educational establishments –i.e. school management awards, school-business partnerships, school administrator training programs, etcetera.

As a contribution toward a review of these issues, I propose the following for inclusion in the Plan of Action to be drafted in the coming two days:

- That an Inter-American Task Force of business, education and government representatives be established to spell out policy objectives and monitor progress;
- That the Task Force, in the understanding that these policy objectives are long-term, act as trustees and overseers of the Plan of Action; and
- That national education plans be adequately funded. Drawing from a recommendation contained in the report of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century chaired by Jacques Delors, I propose that this meeting of Latin American business leaders endorse a “Debt-for-Education Swaps” mechanism designed to offset “the negative effects of structural adjustment and budget deficit reduction upon public spending on education”.

Before finishing, I would like to emphasize the fact that these discussions are profoundly ethical. What we are trying to do is awaken in teachers and students the same sense of concern for justice and equality, and to ensure that the values of the 21st century are steeped in solidarity. Any policy regarding teacher training, ongoing evaluation, and improving the quality of education should be made with the philosophy that what we do we must do for the love of wisdom rather than the power of knowledge, which could bring future generations as much grief as it has brought past ones.

I am greatly honored to be a member of the advisory group to this meeting, and hereby make a personal commitment to be a strong advocate for the actions and commitments that may be asked of Latin American governments following this event.

Thank you.

Latin America Basic Education Summit

March 7-8, 2001 • Miami, FL

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Latin America Basic Education Summit

Excerpts from the Briefing Book

The Latin America Basic Education Summit Briefing Book is a separately published document that discusses in greater depth the issues addressed both in the Action Statement and during the March 7-8 meeting in Miami. It is a snapshot of the status of basic education (K-12) in Latin America that identifies fundamental challenges and practical policy solutions. Here are some key excerpts from the Briefing Book:

“...A well-educated populace is crucial for thriving democracies, strong communities, and individual growth and achievement, not to mention economic growth, development, and global competitiveness.”

“Latin American governments recognize the need for action and have already begun to respond to these issues by giving increased priority to education reform over the past several years.”

“...The greatest contribution that Latin American business leaders can make to improving education is to support governments, politicians and officials committed to the immense and monumental task of modernizing and optimizing the education system in each country.”

“Indicators of the region’s educational problems include low test scores, low levels of education, inefficiency, and inequity.”

“At least four core problems—1) a failure to set standards and evaluate performance; 2) limited school authority and accountability; 3) poor teaching; 4) too little investment in primary and secondary schools—underlie the region’s educational deficiencies.”

“Holding schools accountable requires at least four conditions: standards, information, consequences, and authority.”

“School principals have limited authority, and the clients of education—students, parents, local communities and employers—have almost no influence.”

“...Two problems—training and incentive systems—lie at the heart of deficiencies in the quality of teaching in the region.”

“...Technology should not be added to schools as a new area or new curriculum but should instead be incorporated as one aspect of a larger reform program.”

“...No company can succeed if it is part of an unsuccessful community, and no community can be successful if it lacks an educated population.”

The Briefing Book can be found at the LABES Web site (www.lasummit.org) and is available in Spanish, English, and Portuguese.

*“...at the core of this reform
are quality education for all,
academic standards and
accountability, quality
teacher training to improve
student performance, and the
full use of technology as a tool
to achieve these goals.”*

From left to right, bottom to top :

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Action Statement, 2001 Latin American Basic Education Summit





“Private sector involvement in helping define and monitor policy is essential if education is to meet quality and relevance requirements and effectively contribute to growth and development.”

Gustavo Bell Lemus,
Vice President and Minister of Defense, Colombia

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