

Follow-up of graduates, an institutional program that should be the hallmark of a Public Teacher Training College in the State of Mexico

Seguimiento a egresados, programa institucional que debería marcar el hacer de una Escuela Normal Pública del Estado de México

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Abstract

The monitoring of graduates within Higher Education institutions, specifically Public Normal Schools, aims to identify the impact of their graduates in the labor field, since it is based on the interpretation and analysis of the data derived from the applied instruments (survey and interview) to graduates and employers, from which the information emanates that will reorient the design of the study plans, the improvement of the practice of teacher educators, the review of the relevance of the contents that make up the programs, the linking with basic education institutions, the use of technological materials, infrastructure services, the articulation between areas and departments and guidance for the construction of teacher improvement and professionalization programs, thereby contributing to the progress and transformation of future country teachers.

Resumen

El Seguimiento a Egresados dentro de las instituciones de Educación Superior, específicamente las Escuelas Normales Públicas tienen como objetivo identificar el impacto de sus egresados en el campo laboral, pues es a partir de la interpretación y análisis de los datos derivados de los instrumentos aplicados (encuesta y entrevista) a los egresados y empleadores, de donde emana la información que reorientará el diseño de los planes de estudio, la mejora de la práctica de los formadores de docentes, la revisión de la pertinencia de los contenidos que integran los programas, la vinculación con las instituciones de educación básica, el usos de materiales tecnológicos, los servicios de infraestructura, la articulación entre áreas y departamentos y la orientación para la construcción de los programas de mejora y profesionalización docente, contribuyendo con ello a la progreso y transformación de los futuros docentes del país.

Monitoring, relevance, transformation

Seguimiento, pertinencia, transformación

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Introduction

Higher education institutions in Mexico offer bachelor's degree studies, which are taken after high school education, among them we can identify both public and private universities, polytechnics and teacher training colleges, the latter being the subject of study of this paper.

Within the organization, tasks and even problems faced by the Public Normal Schools is to follow up on their graduates, and identify the level of impact they have in the labor market, because from this, in theory, should emanate the proposal for improvement and change to the plans and programs of study, as well as the process of updating and teacher training.

For this reason, for the case of the State of Mexico, the State Program for the Follow-up of Graduates for the Public Teacher Training Schools of the State of Mexico (PESE) was created, which was published in 2014 and plans as general objective:

"To guide the strategic process of the Follow-up to Graduates of the Public Teacher Training Schools of the State of Mexico, from the analysis of the situations of professional performance, labor and social context of the graduates, through a methodology that allows assessing the relevance and impact of the Educational Plan and Programs for teacher training; at the same time, favoring the academic capacity of the management function; of the core of teachers towards timely and effective attention to the problems, needs according to expectations of improvement, which ensure their quality continuously" (2014, p 9).

Demanded as urgent and necessary to structure within the Normal Schools the Institutional Program of Follow-up to Graduates (PISE), assigning to the area or department that has teaching staff to develop both the general objective and the specific ones, recovering the following:

- Improve the quality of the educational services of the Normal Schools based on the analysis of the degree of satisfaction achieved by the graduate during their training.

- To evaluate the impact of the graduate and the context that defines him/her, during the first, second and fifth year of his/her work/professional performance in the state basic education.
- To support the improvement of the level of performance of graduates in the process of competition and entry into the labor/professional space.
- To create references on the follow-up of graduates of normal education in order to contribute to the systematization of specialized knowledge that can be oriented to proposals on the design of integral processes of postgraduate training.
- Assess the rate of hiring and entry conditions of graduates in the workplace (2014, p 9).

Development

For the achievement of the objectives, the directors of the Escuela Normal de Atlacomulco "Profesora Evangelina Alcántara Díaz" (ENA), have designated the teaching staff of the Department of Educational Research and Innovation (DIIE), the realization of this task.

The first action is the revision of the content of the state program, in order to adapt it to the needs of the population and therefore of the context, that is, to make this exercise meaningful, understanding it as "that which allows the subject to broaden his level of understanding and explanation of his different educational practices and actions" (Perales Ponce, 2006, p.12), hence the need to identify the actions, as well as the temporality, which are listed below:

1. General database of graduates.
2. Introductory session
3. Methodological process
4. Evaluation of the results stage
5. Alternatives
6. Apply/evaluate alternatives

The purpose of the database is to verify that there is information on the graduating class, and if this is available, the next phase is to update it; if not, the researcher(s) will undertake the task of building it.

The introductory session aims to establish communication with those involved (authorities, employers, graduates). The by-product is the delimitation of the sample by Educational Program (EP), to outline and develop the contact, communication and sensitization strategies with the participants.

The methodological process allows establishing the criteria, as well as the methodological route (application of techniques and instruments, scheduled visits, meetings with employers, among others), to facilitate the collection of information.

The evaluation of results starts with the analysis and establishment of conclusions, i.e., it is the evaluation of the process, the results and the fundamental criteria for the achievement of this stage.

Subsequently, the stage of alternatives appears, a moment that emerges from the results and the impact they may have on the teaching staff, students or directors, which, if it results, would have to modify the conceptualization of practice of each of the subjects involved.

Database

The construction of the database by educational program requires general information such as: name of the graduate, age at the time of enrollment in the first semester, marital status at the time of entry, educational program attended, generation to which he/she belongs, municipality of residence, reasons for choosing the degree, as well as the specialty, time devoted to study. The purpose of this section is to know the motive or motives that prompted the graduates to choose the ENA as an institution to train as teachers, in addition to the inclination towards the chosen educational program.

The second part has been named Process of attraction and selection of the best candidates to study teacher training, it gathers information regarding the process of dissemination of the educational offer, as well as the induction to teacher training and the knowledge of the features of the graduate profile.

Section three, Perception of the quality of the training received during the bachelor's degree course, is proposed with the idea of recovering information regarding the quality of the contents of the subject programs, the depth in the treatment and analysis of the contents, the application of the programs of the different subjects, the follow-up of the programs, the didactic strategies used by the teacher educators in the class sessions, the process of evaluation of learning and performance, the relationship between courses and subjects, the link with basic education institutions, the experience during the work and stay in the seventh and eighth semesters, the counseling process for the preparation of the reception document, the recovery of opinions on training support services, quality of infrastructure and technologies, concluding with the efficiency of the administrative processes carried out by the School Control Department.

The articulation of the departments that integrate the Escuela Normal de Atlacomulco in the initial formation of the student allows acquiring information about the participation of the students in the activities programmed by the institution, as well as in the academic projects.

Another important element that integrates this base, is the section that allows to know the experience of the graduate at the time of enrollment and participation in the competition for entry to the service, where issues such as are integrated: information on the requirements and periods of the competition were accessible, identify the percentage of relationship between the contents reviewed in the courses with the items of the instrument, the relationship between teaching practice, intellectual skills and professional ethical responsibilities evaluated in the process of entry into service, the place they occupied when issuing the priority list, the time elapsed from the time of graduation from the EN, until receiving the first appointment and its validity.

Entering the labor market is another of the elements, since it is necessary to know the place of assignment according to their appointment, the period, number of hours assigned and the follow-up to that first moment of work that gives way to the aspect of construction of Educational Programs, where the types of courses recommended by the advisors or tutors for the strengthening of updating during the first two years of work are questioned.

Thus the interaction with the employer, which through a face-to-face interview with the immediate authority, direct or deputy director, there is a dialogue on the degree of satisfaction, the use of school time, the professional practice, taking up aspects such as: didactic planning, content mastery, evaluation of learning processes, learning achievement, communication with parents and the contribution to the continuous improvement of the school, aspects that allow shaping and structuring this database, which after being filled in, should be analyzed, because from it derive the improvement actions and thus comply with the social requirements to those who are being trained as teachers.

Introductory session

A meeting was scheduled with the Initial Training staff to agree on the date, time and place. Subsequently, a summons was sent to the students of the three educational programs offered by ENA, Bachelor in Teaching and Learning English in Secondary School (LEAIES), Bachelor in Teaching and Learning Spanish in Secondary School (LEAEES) and Bachelor in Teaching and Learning History in Secondary School (LEAHES), to present the PISE, socialize the objective, as well as the actions that integrate it and in which the graduates participate.

The members of the graduating class of 2018 - 2022, presented themselves and were attentive to the socialization of the content and requests, agreeing to comply with them, as evidenced by the minutes of agreements.

This meeting was also attended by the college of advisors who performed the function at that time and committed themselves to support the work that was about to begin.

Methodological process

Using the Forms application of Microsoft 365 or better known as Office 365, a form was structured with which it was intended to obtain the information that would give rise to the database and would subsequently yield the information that would allow compliance with each of the specific objectives.

After reviewing the relevance of structuring an instrument with 75 items that implied reading and reflecting on each of the answers, the researchers decided to divide it into three parts, which are included below:

- 1.- Name of the respondent:
- 2.- Age at the time of enrollment in the first semester of the degree program:
- 3.- Marital status at the date of enrollment in the Normal School.

Normal School where he/she completed the initial training.

Educational program attended.

Generation.

Municipality of residence.

What was the main reason you opted for the specialization?

Did you work during your studies?

In what activity?

How many hours of the day did you dedicate to study?

How many hours of the day did you work?

PROCESS OF ATTRACTION AND SELECTION OF THE BEST CANDIDATES FOR THE NORMALIST TRAINING

Was there an induction period for the students to get to know the structure of the Normal School?

Yes

No

Was the student informed about the desirable traits of the future teacher?

Mention the formative intention of the normal education studies:	Evidence
What type of formative approach, is it explicit in the undergraduate curriculum?	Products
Learning-centered approach	The form of evaluation was never disclosed.
Competency-based approach and Curricular, academic and administrative flexibility.	Was there any mention by a professor of the way in which the contents of his course were related to another course or, if applicable, to the Professional Internship Course?
Pedagogical approaches refer to theoretical-methodological orientations.	To what degree did the internships and their problems find support in the contents of the rest of the courses or in those of the specialty?
Disciplinary approaches.	Always
All.	Almost always
Were the texts reviewed in the courses accessible for your consultation?	Sometimes
What was the emphasis of the proposed activities?	Never
The relationship with knowledge was:	Did your stay in the basic education institutions take place in a framework of?
Theoretical	Tolerance
Practical	Learning
Was the analysis of the texts, carried out in the class sessions?	Respect
Do the texts offer possibilities of relation with the practice?	What were the type of pedagogical orientations offered by the practice group leaders?
What percentages of texts and/or activities of the program were worked during the development of the courses?	Focused on learning
Was there an approach to the classroom work by the school authorities or those responsible for the follow-up of study plans and programs to observe the development of the class sessions?	There were only actions regarding the improvement of the practice (didactic actions).
Did the teachers responsible for the courses propose alternatives to review their teaching practice?	There were no orientations to be highlighted
Were the activities worked on, based on the revision of the texts?	Were these orientations complementary to those of the holders of the Teaching Practice path?
Interactive	Yes
Practical	No
Theoretical	Why?
The evaluation in the courses was focused on:	How far from the Normal School was the school assigned to develop the activities of the 7th and 8th semesters?
Performance	Did the professional profile of the head of the group(s) you were in charge of respond to the educational program you attended?
	Yes

No	Does the student representative's communication with the student body inform about relevant issues of the institution?
Do you consider the organization to elaborate the degree work (the portfolio of evidences, the professional practices report and the research thesis)?	Yes
Excellent	No
Good	Why?
Can be improved	Is there active participation of students in the research projects developed in the Department of Educational Research and Innovation?
Deficient	Yes
Regarding the bibliographic collection that the Escuela Normal has, it was:	No
Sufficient	REGISTRATION AND PARTICIPATION IN THE COMPETITION FOR ADMISSION TO THE PROFESSIONAL TEACHING SERVICE
Scarce	Was the information about the requirements and periods of the competition accessible to the interested parties?
Deficient	Yes
Does the computer center have materials to support the pedagogical practices, as well as the activities that emanate from each of the courses?	No
Yes	In what percentage did the content and items of the entrance examination instrument correspond to the contents of the curriculum?
No	10 a 20%
Recommendations:	20 a 40%
Is the speed of the connectivity service of the Normal School?	40 a 60%
Efficient	60 a 80%
Deficient	80 a 100%
How often do teachers at the Teachers' College use computer resources to deliver their sessions?	What is the relationship between teaching practice and the knowledge and skills assessed in the competitive entrance examination?
Always	Total
Almost always	Partial
Never	Null
Mention 5 computer resources used by teachers:	What is the relationship between teaching practice, intellectual skills and professional ethical responsibilities evaluated in the entrance examination?
What was the turnaround time for issuing the semester report card?	Total
ARTICULATION OF THE ENA DEPARTMENTS IN THE WORK OF THE STUDENT'S INITIAL FORMATION	Partial

Null

What was the place occupied in the priority list issued by the Teacher Career System Unit?

What was the result of the evaluation and the performance group, issued in the opinion, of the USICAMM?

What was the time elapsed from the time of graduation from the Normal School, until he received an appointment to work as a teacher of the educational sub-system?

Type of appointment issued by the authority?

What is the period of validity?

ENTRY INTO THE LABOR MARKET

Place of assignment, according to appointment:

Number of hours assigned:

If there were any incidents during the first six months of teaching, what were they?

What were the areas of attention suggested by the tutor to improve teaching skills and competencies?

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Based on the level of performance obtained, what were the recommended courses to strengthen teaching updating during the first two years of work?

OTHER PROMOTIONS:

Were you assigned to any role other than teaching, which one?

EMPLOYER'S DATA:

Name of work center:

Work center code:

Type of institution of enrollment:

Type of support:

a) State public:

b) Federal public

c) Location:

According to school organization

A) Fully organized

B) Other

Level of performance granted to the teacher throughout the school year

Score obtained in the evaluation card of the entity's career ladder area:

CONTEXT OF JOB MOBILITY:

What motivates the request for a change of assignment?

How often do you make such a request to the authorities?

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ETHICAL COMMITMENT TO THE PROFESSION:

What was the result of the evaluation obtained after the first year of service?

What was the updating and strengthening program?

LEVEL OF EMPLOYER SATISFACTION:

What is your perception regarding?

A) Use of school time

B) Didactic planning

C) Content mastery

D) Student assessment

E) Student learning achievement

F) Parent communication

G) Continuous school improvement

Once the instrument was structured, it was sent to the institutional mailing considering the total number of future graduates:

Number of students	Number of students
LEAHES	15
LEAEES	31
LEAIES	40

Table 1 Graduates of the Generation 2028 - 2022

A date was set for the reception of information, and once the agreed time had arrived, the researchers set about the task of reviewing the data recovered from the Forms application, with 100% of responses from LEAIES, LEAEES and LEAHES, from the first part of the instrument.

For the purpose of this research, it was decided to present only the data from the History program, since its members were the only ones who, in addition to completing the survey within the requested time, upon taking the entrance exam and obtaining the result from the System Unit for the Careers of Teachers (USICAMM), did so by email and WhatsApp number provided. In addition, once they were called for the assignment of a position, they sent the appointment of the selected position, allowing the researchers to conclude with the specific objectives set by the PISE.

Methodology

The methodology used to carry out this research is redirected from PESE and consists of longitudinal follow-up of graduates in order to survey and interview them; however, this does not exempt the researchers from documenting and determining the path to follow.

If we start from the idea that research "is a set of systematic, critical and empirical processes that are applied to the study of a phenomenon" (Hernández, 2010, p. 4), this obliges researchers to document and determine the way forward.), this obliges researchers to keep in mind the topic or problem, as well as the objectives, both the general one that aims to guide the strategic process of graduate follow-up (SE), and the specific ones: Improve the quality of educational services, Evaluate the impact of the graduate in the labor context, Support the improvement of the level of performance, Create references on the SE in the ENs and Assess the rate of hiring and conditions of entry into the labor market.

This led to the definition of the two main approaches to research: the quantitative approach and the qualitative approach.

For Hernández Sampieri, the quantitative approach is characterized by:

1. Statement of the problem.
2. Review of the literature for the construction of the theoretical framework.
3. Construction of the hypothesis.
4. Development of the research design.
5. Sample selection.
6. Data collection.
7. Data analysis.
8. Preparation of the report of results.

It is clear that research of this type is as objective as possible, i.e., the researcher observes and records from afar, leaving aside his or her beliefs or assumptions.

For the qualitative approach, the questions and hypotheses can be developed before, during or after data collection and analysis, which is why it is thought to be ideal for this research, given that, during the process, the questions can be modified, specifically in the stage of interviewing employers.

However, it is also recommended that the following steps be considered:

1. State the problem, which can be modified.
2. From examining the social world, the coherent or grounded theory is developed, which allows observing what is happening around it.
3. Hypotheses are generated during the process and are refined as data are collected.
4. To collect data, the researcher poses open-ended questions, which can be expressed through written, verbal and nonverbal language.
5. The techniques to be used to collect data are: unstructured observation, open-ended interviews, document review, group discussions, evaluation of personal experiences, recording of life histories, and interactions and introspection with groups or community.

- 6. The inquiry process is flexible
- 7. It is based on an interpretive perspective.
- 8. The researcher is introduced and is aware that he/she is a part of.

Thus, qualitative research allows and facilitates the depth of the data within the social context, since the researcher is the instrument of collection, and thanks to the interaction, observation and description of the participants, he/she devises the way to record them.

As for the analysis, this will be in accordance with the form and moment in which the data were obtained, it will be more focused on the description of the information and the development of themes.

Some of the elements that can be used to analyze the data range from texts, images, documents, personal objects, among others.

Hernández Sampieri suggests that, for the presentation of results within this research approach, the researcher should use a variety of formats such as: "narratives, text fragments, videos, audios, photographs and maps; diagrams, matrices and conceptual models" (2010, p.14).

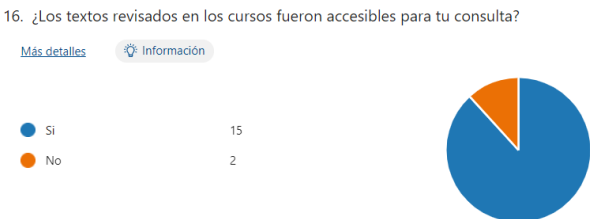
Once the differences between the two research approaches have been discussed, it is concluded that for the execution of this research and given the topic to be addressed, the best way to follow will be the qualitative one, since the researchers are teachers who work at the ENA and were part of the teaching staff of those who make up the selected sample.

Results

The 2018 - 2022 generation specifically of the History program that for the 2018 school year will be integrated by 21 students, concluded with a total of 15 graduates, being 7 men and 8 women, when analyzing the answers regarding the main reason that led them to choose the history program, 53% selected that for liking history, this is an indicator of the importance of feeling at ease and motivated to read and document themselves about the historical facts that will lead them to build different scenarios when planning a class, that is to say to modify their didactics.

Regarding planning: the formative intention of the normal education studies was made known, 47% of the respondents answered yes, complementing the answer as follows: to train competent teachers committed to education and thus achieve an education of quality and inclusion for secondary school students, thus proving that the ENA, fulfills the mission that has been transposed as an institution of higher education and that reads as follows: The Escuela Normal de Atlacomulco "Profesora Evangelina Alcántara Díaz" provides future teachers with a solid initial training and education professionals with continuing education of excellence, to exercise teaching in an innovative and alternative way in the new educational contexts, to contribute to the transformation of society with a gender perspective, substantive equality and inclusion. As well as the provisions of the Ministry of Public Education, "inclusion implies the transformation of schools, which are strengthened by diversity and promote the learning of all students" (SEP, 2018, p.21).

When questioned if the revision of the texts in each of the courses was accessible for consultation, 88% responded affirmatively, while 12% registered no, as can be seen in the following graphic.



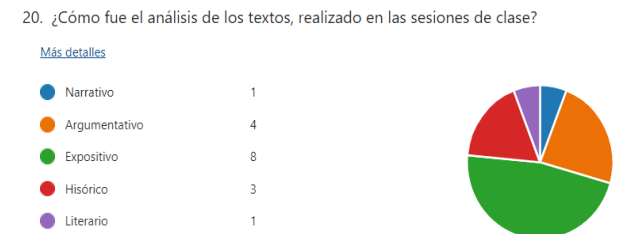
Graphic 1 Revision of texts

Those who responded negatively mention that there was no syllabus available online or in the library, a reality that did not limit the performance of the teacher trainers, because even though this was one of the weaknesses faced during the development of the 2018 curriculum starting with the generation selected as a sample, this did not limit the achievement of the competencies of the graduate profile to be developed (Generic competencies, Professional competencies and Disciplinary competencies). Verifying what Fierro mentions "to approach the problem of teaching from the inside, to see it and live it...to understand it together with them and to be able to measure the distance that separates each one of them" (2010, p.18).

Even so, the following questioning shows the effort of the teachers who taught the courses of the curriculum strip, since most of the students recognize that the bibliography provided was useful for the development of the activities.

When asked about the relationship between the content of the texts and the emphasis of the activities proposed by each of the teachers responsible for the course, 100% responded that this relationship was theoretical and practical, thus contributing to the achievement of the disciplinary competencies derived from the graduate profile.

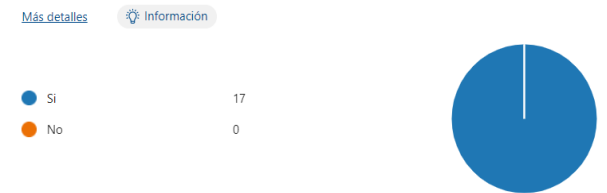
The analysis of the texts reviewed in each of the courses that integrated the 2018 curriculum was: 47% expository, 24% argumentative, 18% historical and the remaining in narrative and literary.



Graphic 2 Text analysis

Regarding the question "Do the texts offer possibilities of relationship with practice?", 100% answered yes, as can be seen in the graph.

21. ¿Los textos ofrecen posibilidades de relación con la práctica?



Graphic 3 Relationship of the texts

In turn, they argued that the review of these texts allowed them:

"Because they helped us for the continuous formation of knowledge".

"They acquire new knowledge so that we can put it into practice, which would be action research".

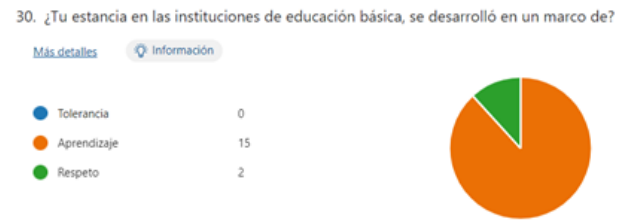
"They allow us to carry it out"

The question: In what percentage were the texts and/or activities of the program worked during the development of the courses? 76% selected the option from 80 to 100%, only 24%, i.e., 4 graduates registered from 50 to 70%. This allows us to interpret that the teacher trainers are committed to the development of the course programs assigned to them by the ENA's academic sub-directorate.

Another important data that helps to improve the exercise of teacher educators, by the guidance and perhaps training of a person external to their teaching practice, is the one who performs the follow-up of the execution of the study programs, with 100% responding that this task was performed, thus contributing to one of the goals and objectives of the study plans, continuous improvement, meeting one of the challenges of higher education: improving student performance and achieving better levels of terminal efficiency.

Regarding the linkage between the EN and the basic education schools, when asked if the teachers who were responsible for the courses proposed alternatives to review their teaching practice, 100% answered yes, adding that they also indicated how the contents were related to the Professional Practice Pathway. In addition to this, 65% of the sample registered that the practice sessions and their problems found support in the contents of the rest of the courses, but 24% did not, selecting the option "almost always".

The approach Your stay in the basic education institutions was developed in a framework of...? 88% answered: of learning and 2% of respect. See graphic:



Graphic 4 Stay in basic education institutions

Another of the elements that mark and to a certain extent determine the meaning of teacher training is the interaction in basic education schools with the teachers in charge of the subject, as well as with the adolescents; therefore, it was considered pertinent to question them about the type of pedagogical orientations offered by the holders of the practice group, registering 76% that these were always focused on learning and 24% were only actions regarding the improvement of practice, considering that these orientations were complementary to those of the holders of the Teaching Practices path, thus proving that "initial teacher training is a concern of different sectors of society and a central issue for educational policies"(Cuevas-Cajiga & Moreno-Olivos, 2022, p. 3).

The following approach was focused on the organization to prepare the Degree Project: Portfolio of evidences, Professional Practices Report and the Research Thesis, with 53% recognizing that it was good, 24% registering it as excellent, 12% that it could be improved and the remaining 12% deficient. It should be added that 100% of the members of the History program at the end of the 2022 school year, graduated under the thesis modality.

88% of the sample responded that Almost always the teachers who teach at the Normal School use computer resources, such as:

Videos, webinars, audios, movies, infographics", " Digital books, TICS, didactic and collective material, free apps ", "Cell phone and computer".

These are some of the approaches that were recovered from the survey and that are believed to contribute to the improvement of teacher training and to the fulfillment of the specific objectives outlined in the Institutional Program for Alumni Follow-up.

Conclusions

The Institutional Alumni Follow-up Program allows us to visualize the realities from which the students come, who decide to join the ENA, because it is an institution of higher education that has a history and academic trajectory in the northern part of the State of Mexico.

The choice of LEAHES responds to the taste for history, as well as for understanding the origin of the events that have marked the lives of human beings.

The Escuela Normal de Atlacomulco conducts the induction for new students, making clear the message regarding the formative intention, to train competent teachers committed to basic education.

Teacher educators renew and give meaning to their teaching practice based on the difficulties and vicissitudes that occur in their daily work.

Teacher educators relate the content of the texts that are reviewed within each of the courses with the practice that takes place in secondary school classrooms, that is to say, the relationship between theory and practice is put into practice.

Teachers exhaust the content of the assigned programs and are accompanied through the study plan and program follow-up program.

The stay of the graduates in the practice schools during their training process allowed them to put into practice the learning acquired in each of the courses that made up the curriculum, in addition to providing support to solve the problems that arose in practice.

The graduates received support in the construction of the document that allowed them to obtain the degree of Licentiate in Teaching and Learning of History in Secondary School.

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