DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Teacher Academy Project

Agrupamento de Escolas Alexandre Herculano - Portugal

Participatory Budgeting at School

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Needs

1. Strengthen student voice in school life.
2. Improve the school through student-led proposals.
3. Help students understand how public budgets can serve the common good.



Fig. 1 - Discussion ideas (Created by the authors with the support of ChatGPT, OpenAI, 2026).

Aims

1. Promote active democratic participation from an early age.
2. Develop proposal-writing, argumentation, and decision-making skills.
3. Simulate real electoral processes within the school context.



Fig. 2 - Presenting ideas (Created by the authors with the support of ChatGPT, OpenAI, 2026).

Implementation stages



Fig. 3 - Votation (Created by the authors with the support of ChatGPT, OpenAI, 2026).

1. Basic Schools receive €500 annually for participatory budgeting.
1. Each class prepares proposals to improve the school, following agreed rules and criteria.
3. Proposals are campaigned for and voted on in a school election that mirror national electoral processes.
4. The winning proposal.

Example: Improvement of the changing rooms

Outcomes

1. Students experience democracy in practice.
2. The school benefits from concrete improvements proposed by students.
3. Students better understand participation, elections, and collective responsibility.
4. The initiative increases engagement, ownership, and a sense of belonging.

Democratic citizenship dimension

Learning democracy by doing: propose, debate, vote, and take responsibility.



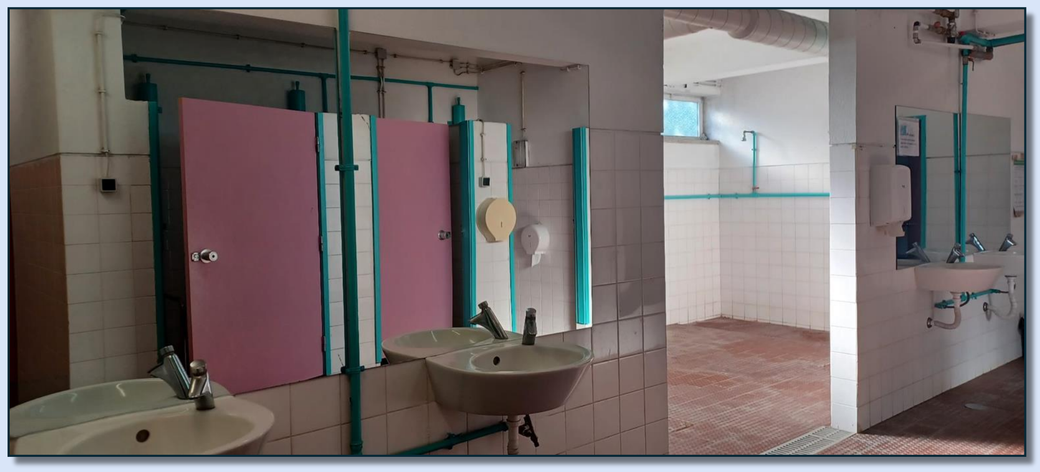


Fig. 4 - Improvement of the changing rooms (Credits: AEAH).