Introduction

School Participatory Budgeting: action civics for democratic renewal

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School participatory budgeting (affectionally known as School PB) is an exciting, innovative civic education practice in which students learn democracy by doing. In short, School PB is a learner-driven process of deliberation and decision-making that empowers students to allocate a portion of a budget to improve their school or their surrounding community. School PB is an offspring of the municipal participatory budgeting (PB) model, which started in the City of Porto Alegre, Brazil, in 1989 and was eventually adopted by thousands of towns and cities worldwide (Dias et al., 2019). School PB and the municipal PB pursue similar aims: building a more democratic political culture, nurturing more democratic citizens, and fostering more democratic institutions (Baiocchi, 2001; Cabbanes, 2004). However, a notable difference is that School PB pays special attention to the pedagogical dimension of the process in its design, implementation, and evaluation. From this perspective, School PB belongs to a long pedagogical tradition that assumes that educational interventions can build the capacities, dispositions, and social relationships necessary for participation in democratic communities by influencing individual and collective understandings, competencies, values, attitudes, and practices. As part of these traditions, School PB is a pedagogical tool that simultaneously promotes citizenship learning, civic engagement, and school democracy.

The idea that children and youth could have an authentic voice in setting school priorities to improve their learning experience and that such voice could be translated into deliberating and voting on budgetary allocations was largely unthinkable in the past. Children were 'to be seen and not heard,' and students were considered passive recipients of knowledge and too immature to make those decisions. Against that background, it is encouraging to see that in the 21st century, School PB is emerging as a promising educational initiative growing worldwide with experiments and stories of impact on motivation, empathy, and leadership and citizenship skills. Currently, School PB is slowly but steadily expanding around the world. Among the countries that have implemented School PB are Argentina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, England, France, Georgia, India, Italy, Lithuania, Mexico, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, Spain, South Korea, Russia, the United States, and Zambia, with the list growing every year. This volume makes an original contribution to the field for several reasons. First, it provides an international overview of School PB and its many iterations and innovations. Second, it includes perspectives from both researchers and practitioners. Further, the chapters of this book disrupt traditional models of civic

education that emphasize memorizing information and provide theoretical and practical insights to those interested in reimagining civic education and school governance.

Democratic backsliding, democratic renewal, and School Participatory Budgeting
Many countries around the world are facing different manifestations of what some have called 'democratic backsliding.' Also known as de-democratization, democratic deconsolidation, democratic erosion, democratic decline or democratic retrenchment, democratic backsliding refers to the gradual deterioration of democratic institutions, values, norms, and practices. This trend also includes increasing political polarization and violence levels, a growing disconnect between citizens and their representatives, and stronger relations between government officials and economic elites. This, in turn, is related to lower public confidence in politicians and political institutions and, in some countries, to the ascendance of autocratic regimes and the restriction of spaces for contestation and public participation (Castells, 2018; Delaney, 2020; Inglehart, 2016; Haggard & Kaufman, 2021; Levitsky & Ziblatt, 2018; McCoy et al., 2018; Plattner, 2020; Van der Meer, 2017; Waldner & Lust, 2018).

To confront democratic backsliding, Ginsburg & Huq (2022) advanced the concept of democratic 'front sliding,' which they define as "the process of rebuilding the political, legal, epistemic, and sociological components of democracy" (p.1). For them, the present challenge is restoring democratic institutions to prior levels of vitality, and they propose three strategies: defending professional integrity, preserving institutions, and contesting subnational offices. We endorse these strategies, but we argue that the task cannot be limited to restoring prior institutional practices or only the tactics of defense and contestation. In addition, we also need a vibrant democratic renewal that accounts for the inclusion of young people in authentic, participatory decision-making and deliberative educational experiences.

Democratic renewal is an ambitious project that requires at least three tasks: complementing the institutions of representative democracy with effective processes of participatory democracy, increasing the civic engagement of politically marginalized groups, and implementing innovative citizenship education programs. In this book, we are paying attention to one strategy that aims to connect citizenship education, youth civic engagement, and participatory democracy: School Participatory Budgeting, or School PB. We emphasize this strategy because younger generations foreshadow future habits, dispositions, and societal practices. Indeed, the values and attitudes espoused by today's youth indicate the direction of the political system in the years to come. Youth engagement in compelling and authentic democratic processes today is likely to influence their expectations about democracy in the future, including demands of transparency, accountability, and meaningful citizen participation (Foa & Munk, 2016; Westheimer, 2019). Furthermore, a recent study (Haggard & Kaufman, 2021) found not only that the absolute measure of youth trust in political institutions has a noticeable effect on liberal democracy but also that lower trust ratios of young people compared to older people in political institutions lead to more significant declines in levels of democracy in the future.

Worldwide, most young people would like to have a voice on issues of public concern. A recent extensive survey that included 21,000 people with nationally representative samples from 21 countries across all regions (Africa, Asia, Europe, and North and South America) and income levels found that, on average, 58 percent of 15 to 24-year-olds believe that is very

important for political leaders to listen to youth *(UNICEF-Gallup, 2023)*. This expectation is consistent with Article 12 of the U.N. Convention of the Rights of the Child (known as 'the right to be heard'), which indicates explicitly that signatory countries shall guarantee the right of all children who are capable of making their own judgments to express their views freely in all matters affecting them and that those views should be given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child. According to this normative framework, schools should offer all students the opportunities to participate in and influence education decisions that have an impact on their lives and the lives of their peers (Beattie, 2012; Freire, 1998; Hart, 1992; Holquist, 2019; Mitra, 2009; Sussman, 2015). Likewise, official documents of many countries claim that education should promote the development of active and democratic citizenship.

In practice, however, this ideal is seldom achieved or even sought. In the real lives of schools, three things are likely to occur. First, most formal education institutions have traditional top-down forms of governance in which school administrators and teachers may make unilateral decisions with little or no input from students. Second, some schools may allow students to express their opinions. Still, prior studies found that these consultations tend to be tokenistic exercises in which adults listen to students with minimal follow-up (Mockler & Groundwater-Smith, 2015). Third, in those schools that allow students to participate and make decisions, such participation is uneven, usually limited to a few leaders (the so-called 'usual suspects') who are part of student government or other committees (Mager & Nowak, 2021). School PB addresses these issues by giving voice to students in a democratic process that involves opportunities for key decision-making and involves not only those students who had prior opportunities for leadership development. In this sense, School PB promotes inclusive civic engagement practices that can have a lasting impact. But civic engagement is only part of the story. Indeed, School PB also contributes to citizenship education by nurturing democratic learning.

School Participatory Budgeting: A new approach to citizenship education
Citizenship education, which in this book we use as synonymous with civic education, aims at the development of knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, and practices that are desired for learners' full participation in democratic societies as informed, active, responsible, and caring citizens (Jamieson et al., 2011; Levine & Kawashima-Ginsberg, 2017). While citizenship education can be conceptualized and implemented in various ways, the traditional model - still prevailing in many parts of the world- emphasizes rote memorization of information. In this 'banking education' approach (Freire, 1970) to citizenship education, the teacher 'deposits' bits of information considered part of 'civics' in the students' minds, who then regurgitate them in standardized assessments. The information tends to focus on memorizing dates, names, and places. While details about historic battles, past presidents, geographic markers, and government structure specifics, like the number of seats in Congress, are undoubtedly valuable, this approach does not necessarily nurture more engaged citizens. In a recent study, Jung and Golapan (2023) provide robust evidence about the lack of political and electoral efficacy of civics test policies regarding voting and call for more participatory civic education experiences.

School PB belongs to a different family. As hinted above, it is part of a pedagogical tradition that develops civic competencies through experiential learning, combines citizenship education with civic engagement, and promotes school democracy (Crick, 1998). In this tradition, democracy is not understood just as a form of government but also as a 'way of life,' and schools are considered

laboratories of democracy, a sort of embryonic community in which students feel that they belong and that they can make valuable contributions (Dewey, 1916). Moreover, this tradition poses that democratic values and competencies can be learned better by addressing real problems than through class simulations, hypothetical situations, or abstract academic exercises (Tonucci, 2020; Miles, 2021; Crittenden & Levine, 2023).

School PB is an exciting educational intervention for two reasons. First, educational institutions are experiencing demands for an overhaul and rejuvenation of citizenship education curricula, emphasizing active learning. Second, concerns about democratic backsliding are increasing the interest in democratic innovations that promote equitable inclusion and representation, transparency, civil dialogue, deliberation, and authentic engagement opportunities. Moreover, there is a growing expectation that children and youth should have a say in decision-making processes that affect their lives and that schools provide a propitious space to align this aspiration with appropriate pedagogical strategies.

Access to student-centered citizenship education and participatory governance opportunities share a symbiotic relationship. When equipped with civic knowledge, attitudes, skills, and practices early on, people tend to have higher levels of political, electoral, and community engagement later in life (Berson et al., 2013; Deimel et al., 2022; Grobshäuser & Weißeno, 2021; Keating & Janmaat, 2016). The heightened engagement, in turn, creates higher expectations and increased demands for participatory opportunities, and this participation, in turn, engenders new democratic learning. In a virtuous cycle, participatory democracy can nurture citizenship learning, and citizenship learning can improve the quality of participatory democracy processes. As the saying goes, it takes two to tango (Schugurensky, 2004).

How it works
For School PB to occur, two primary conditions must be met: a budget and participation. The budget could originate in public or private funds. Participation should include deliberation and decision-making on budget allocations. School PB is often implemented in high schools, but elementary and middle schools and institutions of higher education have also adopted it. Sometimes, students engage with the broader community through mechanisms like Youth PB (Augsberger et al., 2017; Bal´ážová, 2021). The duration of the process may span from a few months to an entire academic year, and it may take place within one classroom or in the whole school. Some districts have implemented School PB in a few schools as a pilot and then expanded to all their schools. At least in one country (Portugal), School PB is a national program. Most often, School PB only involves students in deliberation and decision-making to amplify their voice, but in some cases, adults (e.g., teachers, non-teaching staff, parents, neighbors) participate in some or all activities.

Although the School PB process varies from place to place, it is typically organized in five phases: idea proposal, project development, deliberation and campaigning, voting, and implementation. In the first phase, students identify needs and propose ideas to address those needs. In the second phase, those proposals are transformed into viable projects. Next, students deliberate on the pros and cons of the different projects and campaign for the projects they support. Then, students vote, and the winning projects are implemented. After the last phase, some schools add a celebration of

project completion and conduct an evaluation of the process and its impacts. Some schools even hold a primary vote to select the projects that go to the final ballot.

School PB is often stewarded by a group of students, who act as a steering committee with different names depending on the context. This group serves as a liaison between school personnel and the greater student body and shepherds the entire process along. Methods of selecting the steering committee vary widely. Among them are self-appointment, invitation, elections, and lottery. In some schools, the steering committee is constituted by student government leaders, members of a civic club, or a classroom. These methods have different levels of effectiveness and inclusivity. The steering committee encourages all students in the school to engage throughout the entire process, but their participation usually spikes during idea collection, deliberation, and voting. Overall, the School PB process allows students to engage on their terms, depending on their availability and interest.

Impact
School PB has three main areas of impact: civic learning, school climate, and school improvements. The impact of civic learning includes changes in democratic knowledge, attitudes and values, skills, and practices experienced by participants. In our work on School PB, we have identified over 40 indicators of civic learning. Some of these changes have a lifetime effect. School climate refers to changes in school governance, relationships among school community members, and the sense of community. It implies a transition towards more democratic, collaborative, inclusive, innovative, and solution-oriented school management and increases respect, mutual trust, dialogue, and a sense of belonging. School improvements refer to the actual projects implemented. This includes capital investments and specific programs and activities that improve the quality of the learning experience and social environment, transforming the school for the better (Hagelskamp et al., 2023). The chapters in this book provide evidence of different aspects of these impacts.

While the impacts of School PB on students vary depending on the design of the process, the time, resources, and support allocated to it, the intensity and frequency of engagement, the quality of deliberation, and the implementation of the winning projects, among other factors, recent research reveal several common trends. Some studies found increased knowledge of the history and tenets of democracy, political efficacy, budgeting and project management skills, deliberative and decision-making competencies, financial literacy, research skills, and several leadership abilities needed for long-term civic engagement (Abrantes et al., 2017; Bartlett & Schugurensky, 2023; Brennan, 2016; Cohen et al., 2015; Crum & Faydash, 2018; Duncikaite, 2019; Gibbs et al., 2021; Johnson, 2023; Todd, 2022). School PB also increases voting turnout rates, not only among youth but also among family members: a recent study found that mothers of young people who voted in their first age-eligible election were more likely to vote in the next presidential election and that this trickle-up relationship was stronger among nonwhite children and children who qualified for free and reduced-price lunch (Mumma, 2023). Students also learn the connections between revenues and expenses, taxation, and education funding. Moreover, School PB can narrow the civic engagement gap (García-Leiva et al., 2021; Palacios-Galvez et al., 2017) when reducing self-selection bias.

Impacts on school climate can be observed in increased levels of trust, deeper engagement, peaceful resolution of conflicts, an ethos of care for the common good, and better relationships between students and among students and adults (Albornoz-Manyoma et al., 2020; Brown, 2018; Kupriyanov, 2023). School PB also changes educators' perceptions of young people and nurtures leadership competencies among teachers (Bartlett et al., 2020; Cheerakathil, 2023). Moreover, a more democratic school governance and increased awareness of budgets can result in higher levels of transparency and accountability.

Implementing the projects themselves has several effects, including an increased sense of political efficacy, pride, ownership and satisfaction, reduced rates of vandalism, and a better learning environment. Projects proposed by students are more likely to address relevant needs and be innovative than those emanating from the principal's office. Further, the projects have an impact on both current students and future generations of students as well. One graduating high school student told us, "I am not doing this for me but for my younger siblings and my own children down the road." Sometimes, the impact goes beyond the school community. For instance, in some cities, the success of School PB inspired municipal leaders to implement participatory budgeting at the city level. In other cases, it improved voter turnout rates in local, state, and national elections.

Challenges
Despite its promise as a new approach to citizenship education and the observed impacts, School PB faces several challenges. Among them are external challenges, such as the marginalization of civic education and the emphasis on standardized testing and traditional pedagogical approaches, and challenges inherent to School PB, like implementation, inclusivity, adultism, community participation, curriculum integration, project fulfillment, and evaluation.

External challenges
Marginalization of civic education
Although official government discourses proclaim that one of the most critical functions of schooling is to prepare students for participation in democracy, in practice, civic education is often sidelined, and the time and attention devoted to civic education is also negligible compared to other subject areas. College and career readiness are emphasized, while civic readiness is under-resourced. Funding and support for citizenship education, including programming costs and teacher training, pales compared to other subject areas. In the U.S., for instance, the federal government invests $54 per student in STEM education annually and only five cents on civics (Adams, 2019).

Standardized testing
In many countries, educational performance and accountability criteria rely heavily on standardized testing data under the guise of international competitiveness (Westheimer, 2015). Hence, student achievement in civic education is usually measured by the ability to memorize and retrieve information in multiple-choice tests. There has been limited interest and capacity in evaluating other civic learning outcomes such as critical thinking, collaborative problem-solving skills, deliberative competencies, listening and conflict resolution abilities, political efficacy, or democratic attitudes. Moreover, the emphasis on standardized testing detracts from a better connection to students' lived experiences and their understanding of the world around them.

Traditional pedagogical approaches

The emphasis on standardized testing affects the educational pedagogical approaches to citizenship education. Teaching to the test becomes the norm, with passive learning strategies and instruction heavily dependent on rote memorization of discrete historical information without linkage to current events or issues young people may care about (Akar, 2012; Burgess, 2015). In these contexts, the likelihood of adopting School PB is often contingent upon the political will of some educational leaders who are civic change agents in their communities and understand the link between education and safeguarding democracy. It is also contingent upon the belief system of adults on a school campus who value student-centered education and the potential impact of School PB on participants and school climate (Cheng et al., 2019; Kahne et al., 2021).

Internal challenges

Process implementation

Even if educational leaders are motivated to bring School PB to their schools, implementing a quality process is easier said than done. Like most participatory democracy processes, School PB requires human and material resources, appropriate time allocation for the different phases, good facilitation, clear guidelines, and effective communication, among other factors. It may also require capacity-building efforts, at least during the first year. Additionally, School PB is most often implemented in an in-person setting. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic, all School PB processes had to move online, which had both challenges and opportunities, and several of the chapters in this book address these issues and varying methods of hybrid and in-person implementation.

Inclusion

Like other democratic innovations, School PB runs the risk of reproducing the civic engagement gap. Around the world, wealthier schools are more likely to offer extracurricular programs, and even within the same school, a small minority of students are more likely to participate in those programs and decision-making spaces, such as student government. These students are afforded multiple opportunities for civic learning and leadership development, whereas the rest of the students only receive a "sit and get" curriculum based on rote memorization (Diliberti et al., 2022; Hawkman, 2015; Kahne & Middaugh, 2008; Levinson, 2010; Lo, 2019). School PB attempts to narrow the inclusion gap through several strategies, including the opportunity for all students to participate in the process. However, the challenge of inclusion persists, as students on the steering committee benefit from more civic learning opportunities than those students who may only participate in the idea collection or vote phases. Some of the chapters of this book describe different avenues to address this challenge. For instance, the design of the steering committee can ensure fair representation of the student body (examples include an overrepresentation of historically disenfranchised within educational settings or a classroom-based approach), or mindfully designed opportunities for participation can ensure the inclusion of all students in deliberation and decision-making. Other strategies include centering marginalized voices, utilizing open and shared spaces for meetings and other School PB events, ensuring simple language and pictures in communication methods, and motivating all students to participate in all phases of the process.

Adultism

As several authors in this book confirm, the adoption of School PB is often not widespread, and the process needs to be consistently implemented with fidelity. Like any youth-adult partnership (Y-AP) or school initiative that aims to increase and embed students' voice, the challenge of adultism is present in School PB, and can appear at any phase during the process. Instances have included teachers and administrators modifying project proposals without consulting students, removing proposals from the process without explanation, not adhering to the agreed-upon design of the process, or not following through on the implementation of winning projects. Therefore, all community stakeholders must discuss the expectations, roles, and parameters in advance, aligning School PB with their belief system, prioritizing student-centeredness, transparency, and a commitment to the fidelity of the process (Collins et al., 2017; Petrokubi & Janssen, 2017; Zeldin et al., 2018). In the most successful cases of School PB, with schools integrating the process into the overall school ethos, it may very well be due to the belief system of the adults on a school campus. Educational leaders who are civic change agents within their communities and who understand the link between education and safeguarding democracy seem to place more value on the potential impact of a School PB process. A similar finding has appeared in other studies (Cheng et al., 2019; Kahne et al., 2021), confirming that the motivations for adopting and successfully implementing participatory processes may still hinge on school leadership and adult decision-making.

Community participation

School PB can expand the circle of inclusion by going beyond students and engaging teachers, non-teaching staff, parents, other family members, and neighborhood residents. This constitutes a challenge for two reasons. The first is logistical: the more stakeholder groups and individual participants are involved in the different phases of the process, the more complicated it is to organize activities while ensuring both good quality and inclusivity. The second is normative: the more adults are involved in the process, the more likely that student voice is overpowered, intensifying the risk of adultism.

Curriculum integration

School PB, like other citizenship education programs, is more effective when connected to standards and curriculum content. Clear connections throughout the entire School PB process can be made with social studies (particularly civics, government and history), language, mathematics and the arts, and other areas like biology, physics or chemistry, depending on the projects students propose. However, in many instances, School PB is undertaken as an extracurricular program with limited interaction with classroom instruction.

Project fulfillment

Once students vote on their preferred projects, the next step is moving from expressing preferences at a ballot box (programs or new infrastructure) to a tangible reality. Due to unforeseen budgetary, technical, or legal issues, this can be challenging. Since it is crucial to carry out the different projects voted upon by students as soon as the decisions are made to ensure student trust in the process, school leaders need to anticipate potential issues in advance and clearly explain them to students in case they cannot be prevented.

Evaluation

Evaluating both the process and the impacts of School PB is a challenging task. At a basic level, the School PB process evaluation consists of understanding what worked and what didn't, the strategies used to overcome problems, the degree of inclusiveness and innovation of the program, the level of satisfaction of participants, and their recommendations for improvement. Impact evaluation includes qualitative and quantitative assessments of the learning and change experienced by participants, the changes in school climate, and the projects themselves. Approaches include youth participatory action research (Y-PAR), randomized control trials (RCT), longitudinal studies, and comparative international studies. From a pedagogical perspective, understanding the learning and change experienced by participants (e.g., civic knowledge, attitudes, skills, and practices) is of utmost importance and requires a variety of indicators, creative methodological strategies, and different theoretical lenses (Daas et al., 2023; Donbavand & Hoskins, 2021). Longitudinal studies are instrumental in discovering to what extent current dispositions become future behaviors. For instance, students who engage in School PB often declare their commitment to vote and participate actively in civic and political life as adults. Today, we are unaware of any study examining the connection between these intentions and actual practices. Likewise, following up on the work of García Leiva et al. (2021) and Vîrgă et al. (2022), it would be relevant to evaluate the impact of School PB on attendance and academic achievement mediated by the four dimensions of psychological capital (hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism).

This book
We are happy and proud to present the first book on School PB. The international experts -both academics and practitioners- who have contributed to this volume share many beliefs about the role of School PB in nurturing citizenship learning and preserving democracy. The authors describe stories of success and discuss challenges and tensions and offer recommendations for innovation, implementation, and evaluation. The different chapters (organized in alphabetic order of first authors) help us learn how School PB is gaining traction across countries and how each national or local context can explain similarities and differences.

The first chapter, by Pedro Abrantes, examines the case of Portugal, the first country in the world to launch a national initiative of School PB. Since 2017, every year, all Portuguese public secondary schools can request government funds for improvement projects to be proposed, discussed, and voted on by students using School PB. The first section discusses international studies about the relationship between education and democracy and previous research on School PB. Next, Abrantes describes the program carried out in Portugal by analyzing official records and reports. The chapter concludes with lessons from the Portuguese experience and suggestions for research and practice. Chapter two by Jonathan E. Collins, Pamela Jennings, Matthew Lioe, Camila Olander Echavarria, Janelle Haire and Emma Britton Miller focuses on how School PB can be used as a tool for racial and social justice. Through an analysis of a case study with a Latino immigrant community in Central Falls Public School District in Rhode Island engaged in a School PB process, the authors assess the capacity for School PB to be a tool for fostering racial equity and justice. Collins et al. discuss the impact of the initiative *Voces Con Poder* and found that the School PB process increased community members' attitudes of empowerment and fostered more political participation and representative decision-making.

In the third chapter, Thea Crum and Katherine Faydash analyze the experience of School PB in Chicago, an offspring of the first municipal PB process in the United States. Crum and Faydash trace the early roots of PB and School PB, which has grown to become embedded into the curriculum in Chicago Public Schools elementary and high schools, the fourth-largest school district in the United States, serving over 300,000 students. The authors focus on the youth-centric aspects of School PB and examine three models in which the process has been implemented, discussing each model's structure, benefits, and challenges. In chapter four, Andrés Falck and Marta Barros examine Children's PB, a budding practice carried out by a growing number of worldwide municipalities in response to demands of democratizing governance and inclusion of children in political dialogue. Falck and Barros argue that implementing PB with children can actualize participatory democracy principles like democratic inclusion, empowered decision-making, and schools of citizenship. They systematize the main features of government-school alliances in PB management and analyze 40 cases of PB processes with child participation across ten countries. The findings reveal four significant features that support the goals of participatory democracy: the role of school staff, the role of students, rules, and self-rule in schools, and proposals and decision-making.

Chapter five by Alberto Ford, Gisela Signorelli, and Patricia Sorribas explores why young people become involved in PB in schools and universities. After discussing different theories about human motivation, the authors chose an approach based on causal attributions, trying to understand how subjects perceive their own actions and how students explain the reasons for participating. Ford et al. analyze these motivations using the results of a survey conducted with students who participated in the PB process at the university level and in three secondary schools in Rosario, Argentina. While the motivations for participating were varied, it was found that collaborative designs interact with motivations. Moreover, the same designs applied in different school environments may encourage different attitudinal dispositions among young people participating in PB processes. In Chapter 6, Ana Patricia Santamaría Garcia and Alan Andrade provide an overview and insights into the work of Ollin A.C., a Mexican nongovernmental organization, with School and Youth PB processes, focusing on a School PB process in Merida, Yucatan. The authors begin by tracing local partnerships and capacity-building efforts, followed by a description of the School PB process, detailing implementation steps and process results. The authors summarize key findings and recommendations for future PB processes with youth, particularly with students.

In chapter seven, Jez Hall examines how School and Youth PB prepare young people to become active citizens through opportunities to learn about and practice democracy in their schools. Through a practitioner-centric description, Hall traces the development of School and Youth PB within a UK context over a 15-year horizon, chronicling the significant challenges encountered to truly embedding the PB process within schools and communities. These challenges are discussed from a power perspective linked to the banking and problem-posing pedagogical approaches of education, as articulated by Paulo Freire, and in navigating youth-adult partnerships. Hall then highlights instances of PB that, when coupled with other democratic innovations (especially those taken up and fostered by youth), can serve as a youth-led, equitable approach to the democratization of spaces and resources. Chapter eight by Aleksandra Ilijin and Jelena Karac features an overview of how School PB evolved from a pilot experiment in the city of Novi Sad into a national youth strategy in the Republic of Serbia. The authors detail how decades-long efforts to advocate for more youth-inclusive policies resulted in a national initiative that has

embraced and catapulted the adoption and implementation of participatory processes like School PB. The chapter illuminates the synergies created through the interactions between local, provincial, and federal agencies and between governmental and nongovernmental organizations in promoting and implementing youth-led participatory processes. In chapter nine, Antonnet Johnson describes the evolution of the School PB initiative of the Participatory Budgeting Project (PBP) and presents the main findings emanating from interviews with PBP staff and a participatory workshop. Johnson details the insights shared by PBP staff while implementing large- and small-scale School PB processes in high school communities throughout the United States. In the concluding section of the chapter, Johnson discusses five overarching lessons and supporting recommendations to consider when designing and implementing a School PB process: budgeting for staffing, implementation, and training, delineating roles and responsibilities of adults and youth, outlining participation goals, leveraging relationships, and collecting relevant data.

Chapter ten by Patricia García-Leiva, Nazly G. Albornoz-Manyoma, and Mª Soledad Palacios-Gálvez considers the educational effects of school PB from a psychosocial perspective. Drawing on theoretical frameworks in this field, the authors discuss empirical findings from studies on psychological empowerment showing that participation not only develops democratic skills but also improves group relations. The case study analyzed in this chapter (Ágora Infantil in southern Spain) confirms these results with evidence of improved group cohesion, identification, inclusion, friendships, and networks, increased psychological empowerment, and reduced negative interactions. The Ágora Infantil illustrates the significance of considering the interactions between individuals and their context in both the design of processes and the interpretation of their results. In chapter eleven, Ekaterina Petrikevich discusses the expansion of Czech-Slovak School PB processes to a youth-led City PB process. She begins by chronicling the social and political context that served as a springboard for the expansion, followed by a description of the Czech-Slovak School PB methodology, the roles of the different actors, and the innovations that led to the development of active citizenship among participants. Moreover, Petrikevich compares the civic competencies promoted by different participatory processes like Primary School PB, High School PB, School Parliament, Youth-Led City PB, and City Youth Parliament. The skills gained by children and youth range from deliberation, public speaking, and presentation to campaigning, facilitation, leadership, project management and advocacy, among others. Petrikevich concludes by explaining how cyclical implementation and continuous innovative designs have fostered trust and receptivity in scaling School PB to youth-led City PB.

Chapter twelve by Madison Rock presents a transcendental phenomenological study aimed at understanding Arizona educational leaders' motivations in adopting and implementing School PB processes. Additionally, Rock explores impacts on students and school communities, key challenges in implementation, and recommendations for the future of School PB in Arizona and beyond. The educational leaders, including school principals and superintendents of school districts, observed that School PB increased student agency, built stronger relationships, strengthened democratic dispositions, improved social skills and made a positive difference in their school community and for long-term civic engagement. While the challenges noted were similar to those of many education initiatives (i.e., time, fidelity, and resources), recommendations included utilizing a more inclusive approach to engage the broader school community in the process and a deeper commitment to curricular alignment. In chapter thirteen, Stefano Stortone and Elisa Biacca discuss School PB as a recent practice in Italy, with the first experience of School

PB in Italy occurring in 2017. Stortone and Biacca describe several case studies, noting how innovations to the process and new experiences have built upon one another, promoted citizenship learning, fostered more resilient relationships within the school community, and increased interest in school community participation and engagement. While the authors describe several of the challenges that have limited the expansion and hindered the full potential of School PB, they also share different strategies that have been implemented to overcome these challenges, resulting in promising outcomes and interesting insights. In the final chapter, Mateusz Wojcieszak and Daniel Schugurensky describe the history and current situation of School PB in Poland, with a focus on the work of a local nonprofit organization (*Fields of Dialogue)* that promotes the participation of citizens in public life and creates tools to facilitate deliberative processes. The authors begin with an overview of the Polish School PB process and describe how the civil society organization Field of Dialogue supports the implementation, facilitation and evaluation of these processes in local schools. Next, the authors detail key findings from the evaluation of these processes and share critical lessons learned from the Polish School PB experience.

Summary and Conclusions
The democratic backsliding, political polarization, and autocratic regimes experienced by many societies worldwide are increasingly calling for more representative, transparent, responsive, inclusive, and participatory governance at all levels. At the same time, citizens are voicing the desire for greater access to decision-making processes that affect their lives, and educational institutions are receiving demands for an overhaul and rejuvenation of civic education. These three-fold present-day challenges share a critical juncture concerning the quality of democracy, motivations to participate in authentic engagement opportunities, the sustainability of practices and processes, and the acquisition of civic knowledge, attitudes, skills, and practices.

As the chapters of this book attest, School PB has great potential to address these calls through a student-centered pedagogy and an authentic process with tangible outcomes. It nurtures experiential civic learning opportunities by engaging students in deliberation and decision-making about problems they care about. Through these processes, they research, practice democracy and behave as citizens of the present. Students participating in these programs show higher levels of civic knowledge, self-efficacy, and political and community engagement (Andolina & Conklin, 2018; Ballard et al., 2016; Blevins et al., 2021; Levinson, 2014). These programs also foster spillover effects such as increased school engagement and higher academic achievement (Cohen et al., 2021; Kahne et al., 2022), build trust in democratic processes and political institutions, and reduce politically polarizing behaviors later in life (Gardner, 2020; Clark, 2017, 2023). Moreover, in instances of family involvement in participatory democracy processes within schools, increases in civic skills and a desire for broader community engagement have been observed (Altschuler & Corrales, 2012). School PB distinguishes itself from other civic education programs because it opens engagement opportunities for every student, not just for a small group of already involved and motivated leaders. In sum, School PB holds promise as a model that supports citizenship education, actualizes democratic values and ideals, and advances the children's right to be heard. As Ariana Cavarez, a 14-year-old student in Phoenix, noted: "It feels amazing [that] everyone could have a chance to vote and know that their voice matters in our school."

School PB is a compelling program for schools because it has been developed and continuously improved with input from educators, tested in the field in many schools around the world, and

backed by a robust body of empirical research. In School PB, students learn not only about democracy but also through democracy by participating in deliberative activities concerning real resources and making decisions relevant to them and future generations of students in their school. Real-world problems and projects add relevance and motivation to the learning experience. School PB also contributes to pedagogies promoting interpersonal conflict communication and problem-solving by nurturing student autonomy and agency on the one hand and democratic and inclusive institutional practices on the other. Like most things in life, School PB is not perfect. However, it is perfectible. It is a relatively new practice, so there is much room for innovation, improvement and refinement. As the first book on School PB that describes initiatives, research findings and lessons from around the world, we hope it provides inspiration, helpful information and insights to practitioners and researchers interested in further exploring this educational democratic innovation.

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