



SCHOOL PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING AT ROOSEVELT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT 2022-23 Evaluation Report

In partnership with Center for the Future of Arizona, Roosevelt Elementary School District, and Arizona State University's Participatory Governance Initiative.

In 2022, Roosevelt Elementary School District (RSD) became the first fully elementary school district in the nation to adopt School Participatory Budgeting (SPB). Through this innovative civic learning process, RSD partnered with Center for the Future of Arizona (CFA) and Arizona State University's Participatory Governance Initiative (PGI) to pilot, implement, and evaluate the SPB process to ultimately:

- Deepen connections among students, teachers, and staff within the school community
- Increase outcomes of students' civic knowledge, attitudes, skills, and practices
- Positively impact student well-being and school climate

STUDENT REFLECTIONS

- "We're leaving something behind that we were able to make happen."
- "I've learned how to work better on a team."
- "I was able to make choices that are good for the school."
- "Everyone had the opportunity to vote which way to make the school better."

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

District Leaders

- Former Superintendent
- Executive Director of Leadership and Learning
- Executive Assistant to the Executive Director of Leadership and Learning

SPB Advisors

- Center for the Future of Arizona, Civic Health Team
- Arizona State University Participatory Governance Initiative

School Leaders

- Principals and Assistant Principals from 9 schools

SPB Sponsors

- 11 Educators from 9 schools

Student Steering Committees

- 102 2nd-8th grade students from 9 schools who led the SPB process

55+
HOURS of direct training
and implementation
support

SPB Winning Projects

<i>School</i>	<i>Voter Turnout %</i>	<i>Winning Project</i>
Bernard Black	81%	Soccer Field
Cesar Chavez	76%	Playground Plus
Ed & Verma Pastor	89%	Snack Machines for Field Trip
Ignacio Conchos	88%	Reflections in the Mirror
John R. Davis	81% ¹	More Sports Equipment
Martin Luther King, Jr.	94% ²	Exciting Recess Choices to Play With
Southwest	77%	Game Room
T.G. Barr	91%	Seating & Shade
V.H. Lassen	91%	Gaga Pit

Overview of Evaluation Findings

- High satisfaction rates with the process across students, educators, and school leaders; citing the support from CFA and PGI as integral to implementation and completion
- Students took pride in learning about budgeting and voting systems and using teamwork to help their school community
- Students showed increased knowledge of participating in a democracy, a desire to participate in school improvement efforts, improved skills like public speaking, and an adoption of practices, such as wanting to help make decisions within their school.
- Educators and school leaders took pride in students using their voice and creativity to advocate for others and solve challenges.

Recommendations

- *Starting Early:* Students, educators, and school leaders agreed that starting the process earlier in the school year would improve their experience and the quality of the process.
- *Establishing Clear Expectations and Communication Channels:* Participants agreed that learning about expectations of specific aspects of the SPB process (i.e., project proposals, purchasing rules, policies, vote day logistics, etc.) and establishing communication channels between students, educators, school leaders, and district personnel at the outset would improve the process.
- *Increasing the Budget and Opportunities for Participation:* Students asked for a larger budget amount, while all participants agreed on the need to increase avenues for participation throughout the SPB process.
- *Providing Additional Curricular Support:* Educators cited the need to connect the SPB process more explicitly to academic standards and RSD curriculum resources.

HIGHLIGHTED STUDENT GAINS IN KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES, SKILLS, AND PRACTICES

- I know about participating in a democracy (+19%)
- I know what other students need at my school (+16%)
- I know how to fix problems at my school (+12%)
- I feel my ideas are being heard by others in my school (+11%)
- I can speak in front of other people (+11%)
- I help make decisions in my school (+12%)

Taken together, these findings support the RSD SPB process as having fostered positive school climates, increased the building of relationships and communication within school communities, and further developed a desire for continuous school improvement.