

*Participation***A 5 step process for participatory action**

The following 5 step procedure illustrates an ideal process for participatory, democratic action that you can apply in your school (based on Fung 2004). In this procedure you can involve the staff but also the students, parents and others who are affected by the issue to be decided.

- 1. Agenda setting (Identification of what to act upon):** The issue to be acted upon can
 - a) concern the implications of laws and regulations set forth by school authorities,
 - b) concern current queries, concerns or problems at school,
 - c) or simply be openly defined together.
- 2. Discussion and proposition:** Suggestion, justification and discussion of alternatives, proposals and strategies to address the issue; This phase results in an action plan which should contain:
 - a) concrete tasks to be accomplished,
 - b) the assignment of tasks,
 - c) expectations about what the tasks will accomplish according to the issue in question and
 - d) the evaluation methods to assess if the tasks have been accomplished and whether the desired effects have been achieved.
- 3. Action:** People try to follow the action plan and carry out the tasks.
- 4. Evaluation:** After the action has been completed, people discuss how things worked out. Neither the result of step 1 nor the results of step 2 and 3 can ensure the best way of dealing with regulations, the solution of a problem, the effective treatment of a concern or the perfect answer to a question. The commonly developed tasks in step 2 express expectations and the actions carried out in step 3 are experimental. Evaluation provides information about the results of those experiments.
- 5. Restart:** According to the results of the evaluation, the procedure can end or start again from the beginning. If necessary, rethink all concerns and strategies to increase the likelihood of better results.