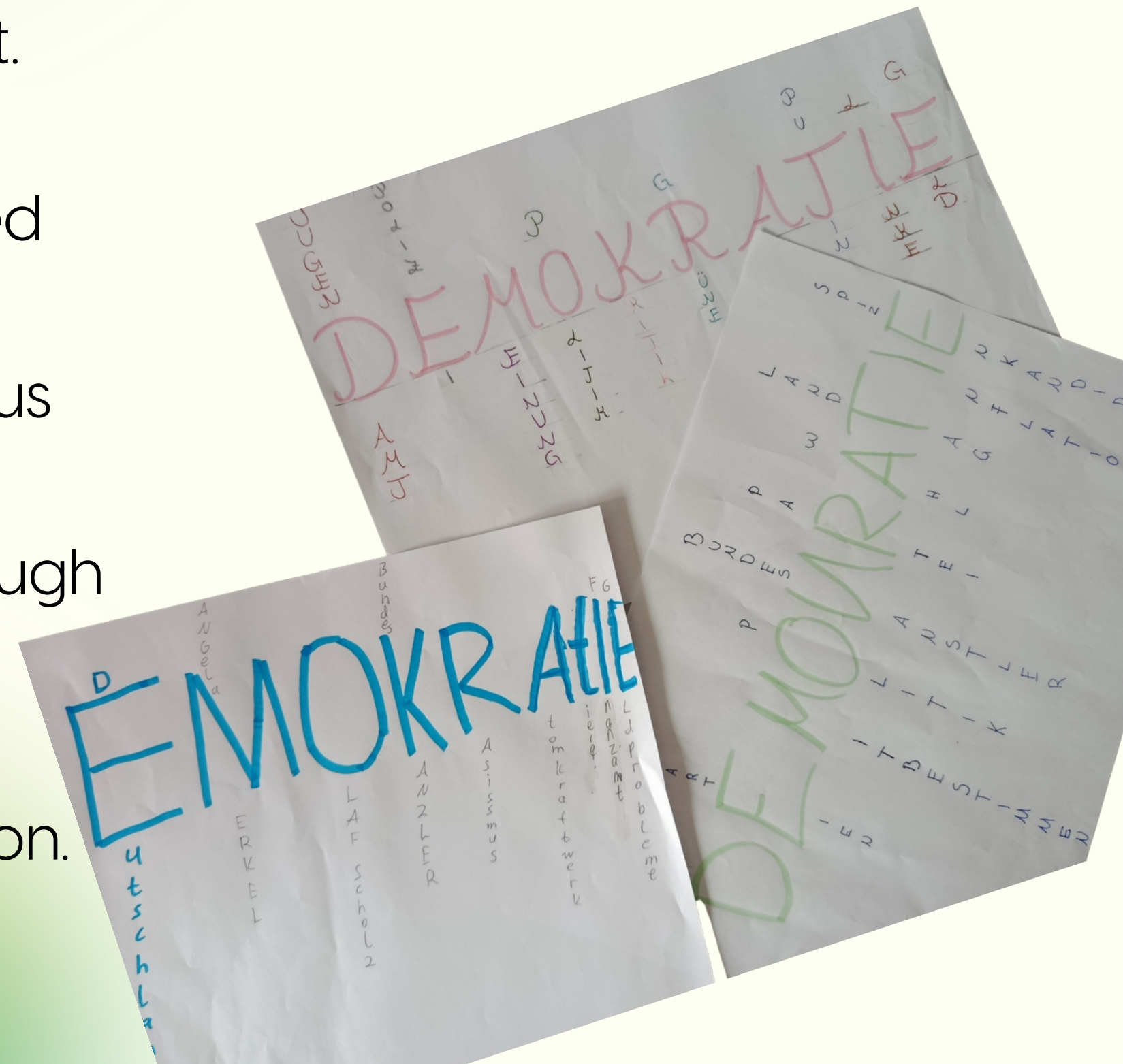


Schoolyard of Ideas – Shaping Our School Together

A PROJECT OF A
GEMEINSCHAFTSKUNDE CLASS

Initial Situation/Problem

- Many students feel their voices are not sufficiently heard in decisions about the school environment. There is potential for improvement in the schoolyard and daily school life, but no structured participation process exists.
- In Gemeinschaftskunde class, building on previous work on the state election, we focused on democracy and assessed prior knowledge through an acrostic activity.
- This led to the "Schoolyard of Ideas" project as a practical way to explore democratic participation.



Objectives

- Learn about and reflect on democracy through practical experience and active participation
- Give students a voice in shaping their school environment
- Make democratic participation visible and accessible
- Encourage students to express ideas and take responsibility
- Present concrete suggestions to the school administration

Target Groups

- Primary: Students of our school (grades 5–10)
- Secondary: Teachers and school administration
- Indirect: School community as a whole

Process and Activities

1. Idea Collection

- Surveys

2. Discussion & Selection

- Class discussions
- Grouping and evaluating ideas

3. Voting Phase

4. Critical reflection on the Democratic Nature of the Voting Process

5. Presentation of Results

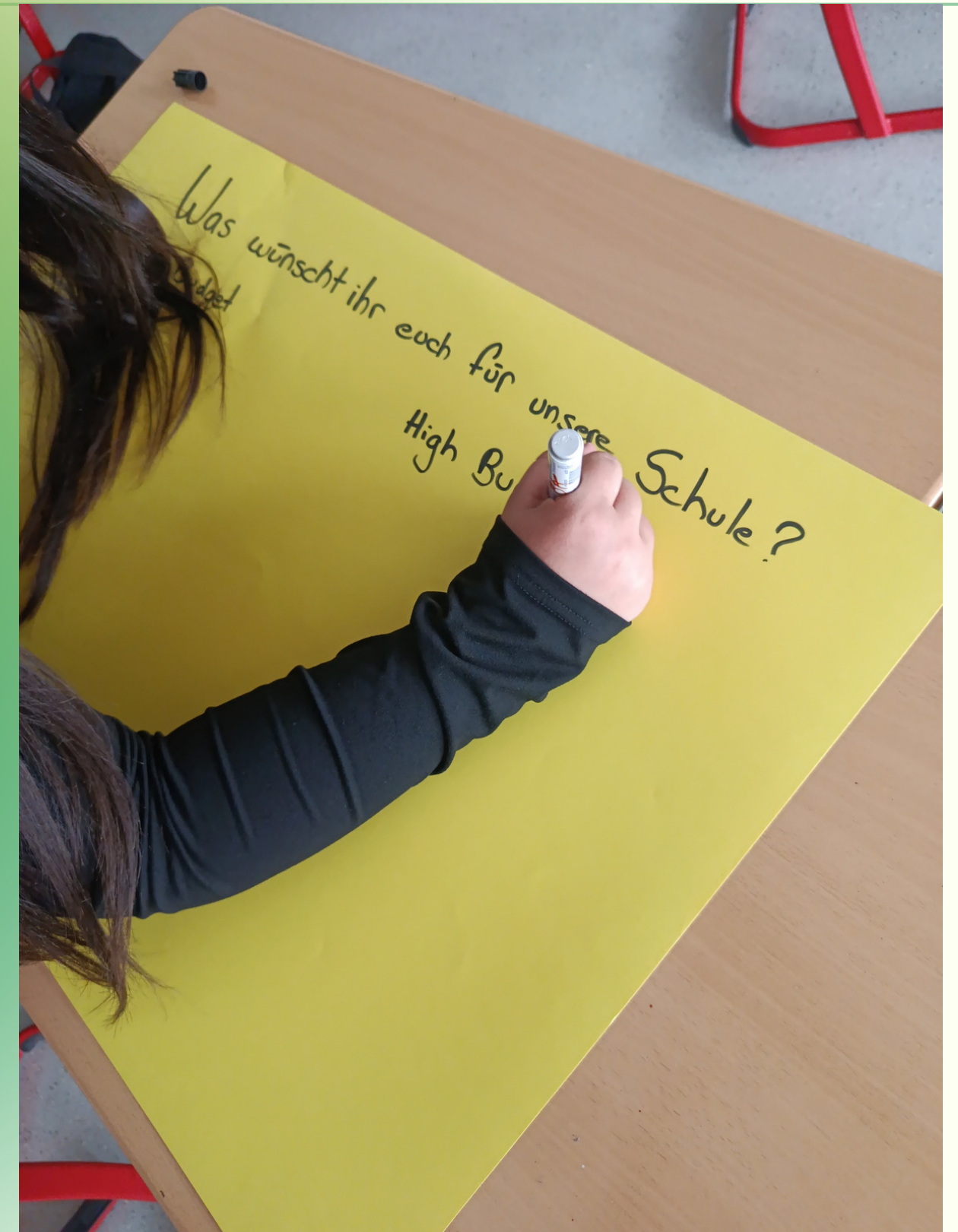
- Top 3 ideas presented to school administration

Idea Collection

- Students interviewed their peers and collected ideas to improve the school environment, including both low- and high-budget suggestions.
- The ideas were then grouped into two categories: low-budget options for possible project funding and high-budget options as input for future decisions by the school administration.

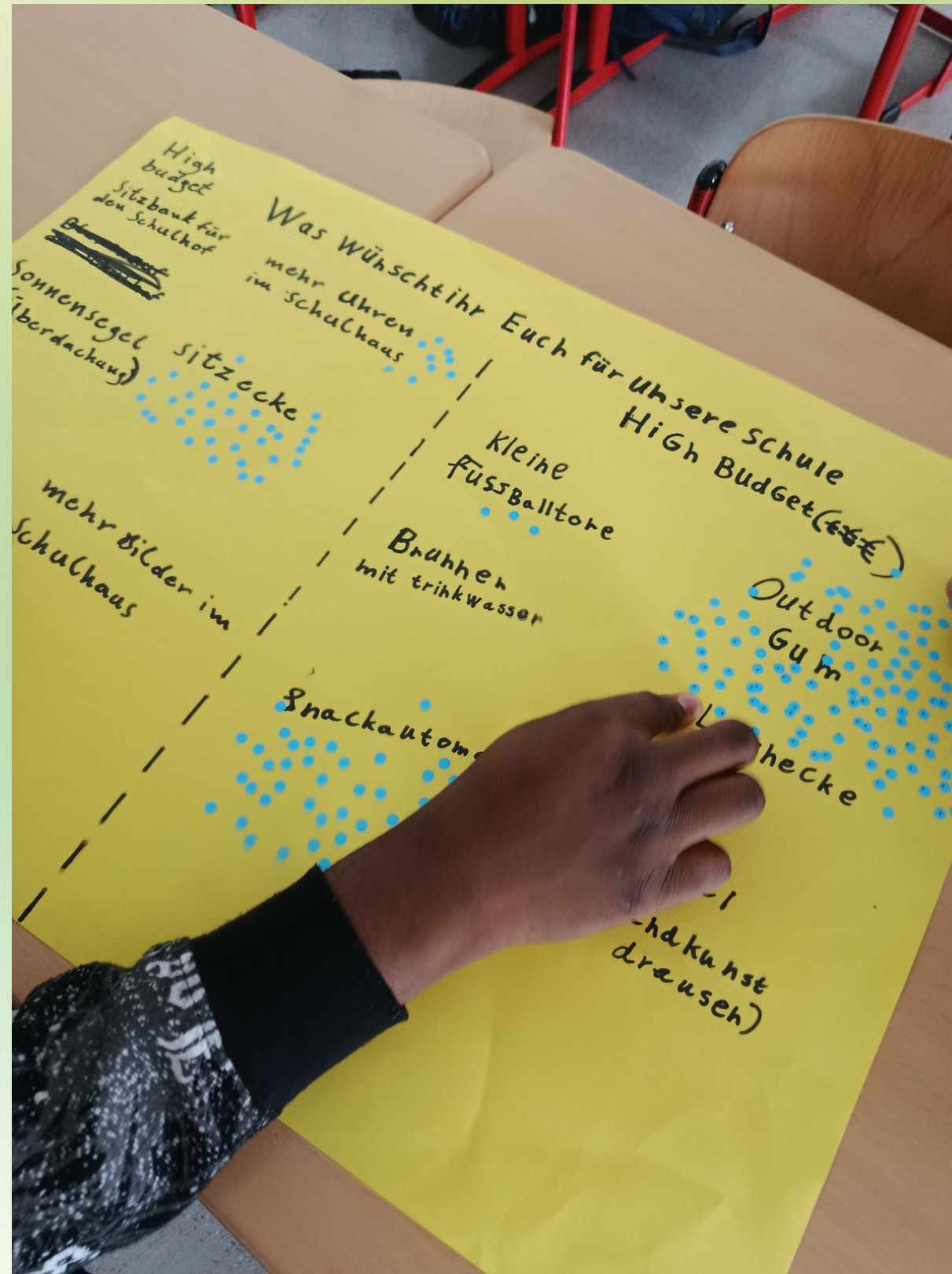
Discussion and Selection

- From the collected ideas, six low-budget and six high-budget options were selected for student voting.
- Low-budget ideas included benches, beanbag chairs, flowers, more pictures, additional clocks, and a sunshade.
- High-budget ideas included small football goals, an outdoor gym, a drinking fountain, a study corner, a snack vending machine, and a mural.



Voting Phase

The students conducted the voting process in 22 classes using posters and stickers, and of course also cast their own votes.



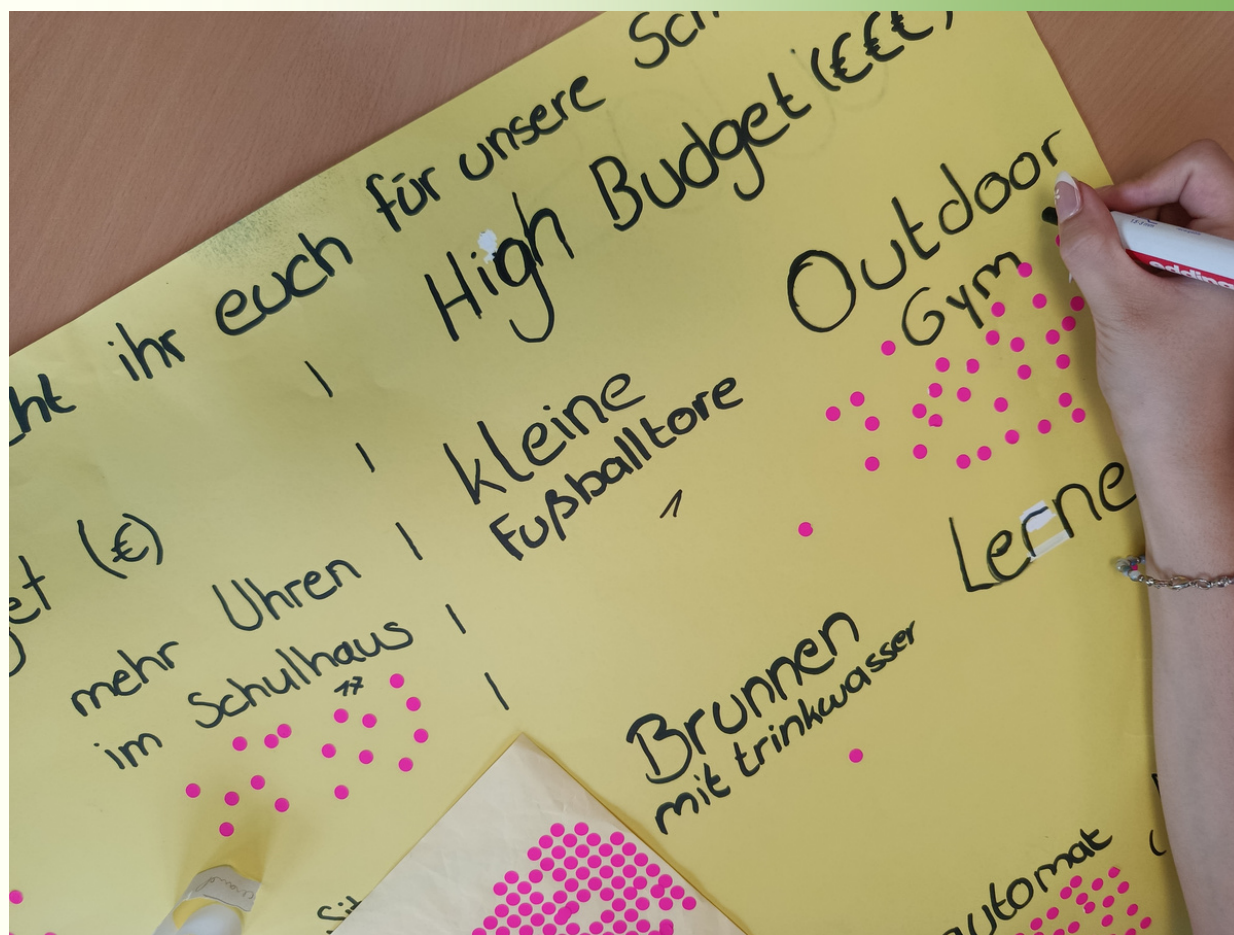
Voting Phase

Working in small groups, they presented the ideas in each class and moderated the voting process.



Voting Phase

Afterwards, they counted the votes and submitted their group results, which allowed us to compile an overall result.



Voting Phase

Was wünscht ihr euch für unsere Schule?

Low Budget (€)

Sitzbank für den Schulhof 0

Blumen auf dem Schulhof 2

Sonnensegel (Überdachung) 1

mehr Uhren im Schulhaus 6

Sitzsäcke 10

mehr Bilder im Schulhaus 0

High Budget (€€€)

kleine Fußballtore 1

Brunnen mit Trinkwasser 1

Snackautomat 32

Outdoor Gym 22

Lernecke 9

Mural (Wandkunst draußen) 0

Was wünscht ihr euch für unsere Schule?

Low Budget (€)

Sitzbank für den Schulhof 1

Blumen auf dem Schulhof 1

Sonnensegel (Überdachung) 1

mehr Uhren im Schulhaus 7

Sitzsäcke 32

mehr Bilder im Schulhaus 1

High Budget (€€€)

kleine Fußballtore 1

Brunnen mit Trinkwasser 1

Snackautomat 84

Outdoor Gym 32

Lernecke 1

Mural (Wandkunst draußen) 1

High budget

Was wünscht ihr Euch für unsere Schule

High Budget (€€€)

Sitzbank für den Schulhof

mehr Uhren im Schulhaus 9

Sonnensegel (Überdachung)

sitzzecke 34

Blumen auf dem Schulhof 3

mehr Bilder im Schulhaus 0

kleine Fußballtore 5

Brunnen mit trinkwasser

Snackautomat 60

Outdoor Gym

Lernecke

Mural (Wandkunst draußen) 1

Was wünscht ihr euch für unsere Schule?

LOW BUDGET

Sitzbank für den Schulhof 2

Blumen auf dem Schulhof 0

Sonnensegel (Überdachung) 44

mehr Uhren im Schulhaus 7

Sitzsäcke 5

mehr Bilder im Schulhaus 0

HIGH BUDGET

kleine Fußballtore 2

Snackautomat 7

Brunnen mit Trinkwasser 6

Outdoor Gym 189

Lernecke 1

Mural (Wandkunst draußen) 1

Low Budget (€)

Sitzbank für den Schulhof 27

Blumen auf dem Schulhof 3

Sonnensegel (Überdachung) 3

mehr Uhren im Schulhaus 10

Sitzsäcke 13

mehr Bilder im Schulhaus 8

High Budget (€€€)

kleine Fußballtore 0

Brunnen mit Trinkwasser 1

Snackautomat 34

Outdoor Gym 24

Lernecke 5

Mural (Wandkunst draußen) 4

Was wünscht ihr euch für unsere Schule?

Low Budget (€)

Sitzbank für den Schulhof 3

Blumen auf dem Schulhof 2

Sonnensegel (Überdachung) 4

mehr Uhren im Schulhaus 27

Sitzsäcke 58

mehr Bilder im Schulhaus

High Budget (€€€)

kleine Fußballtore

Brunnen mit Trinkwasser

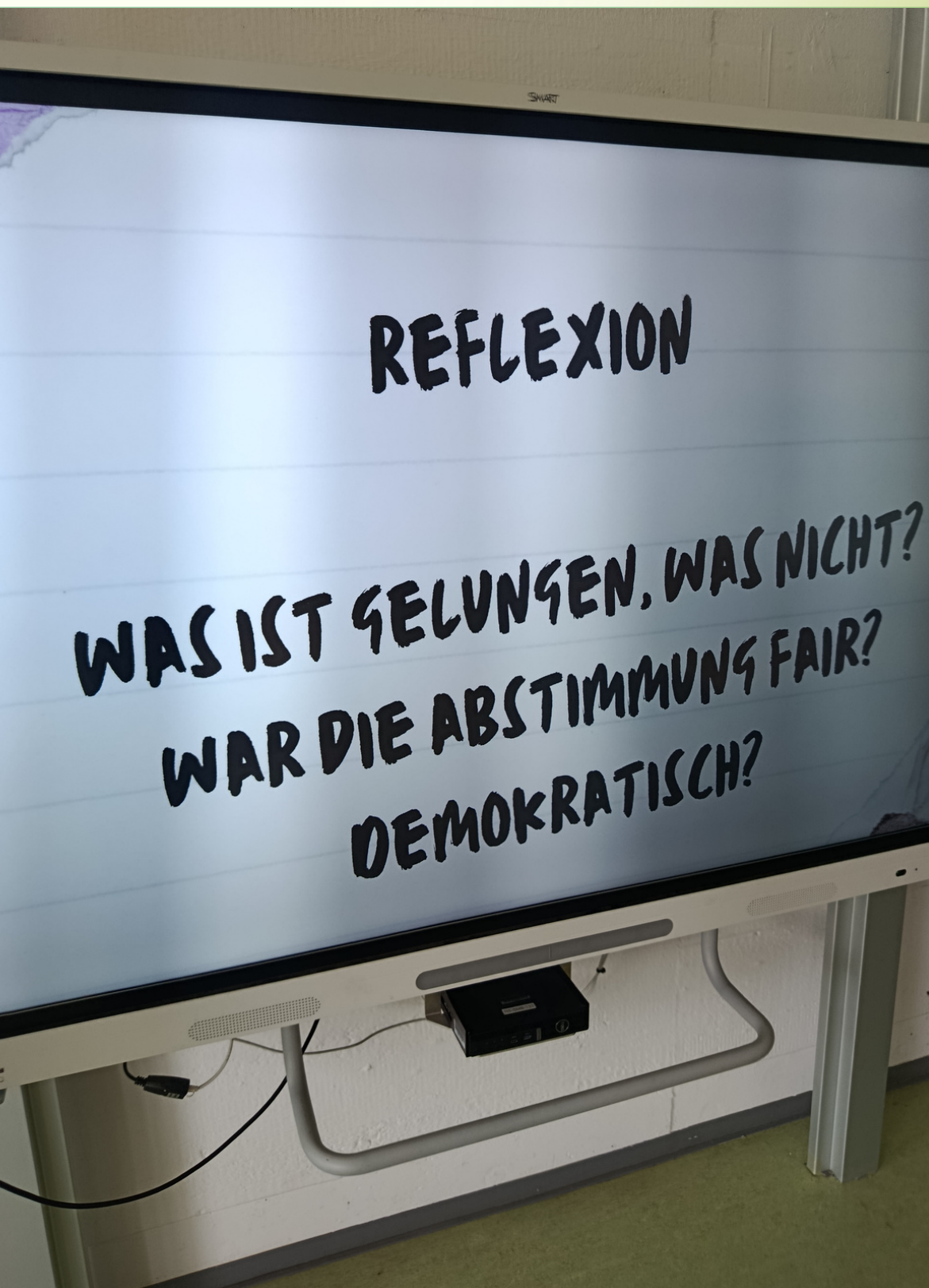
Snackautomat

Voting Phase

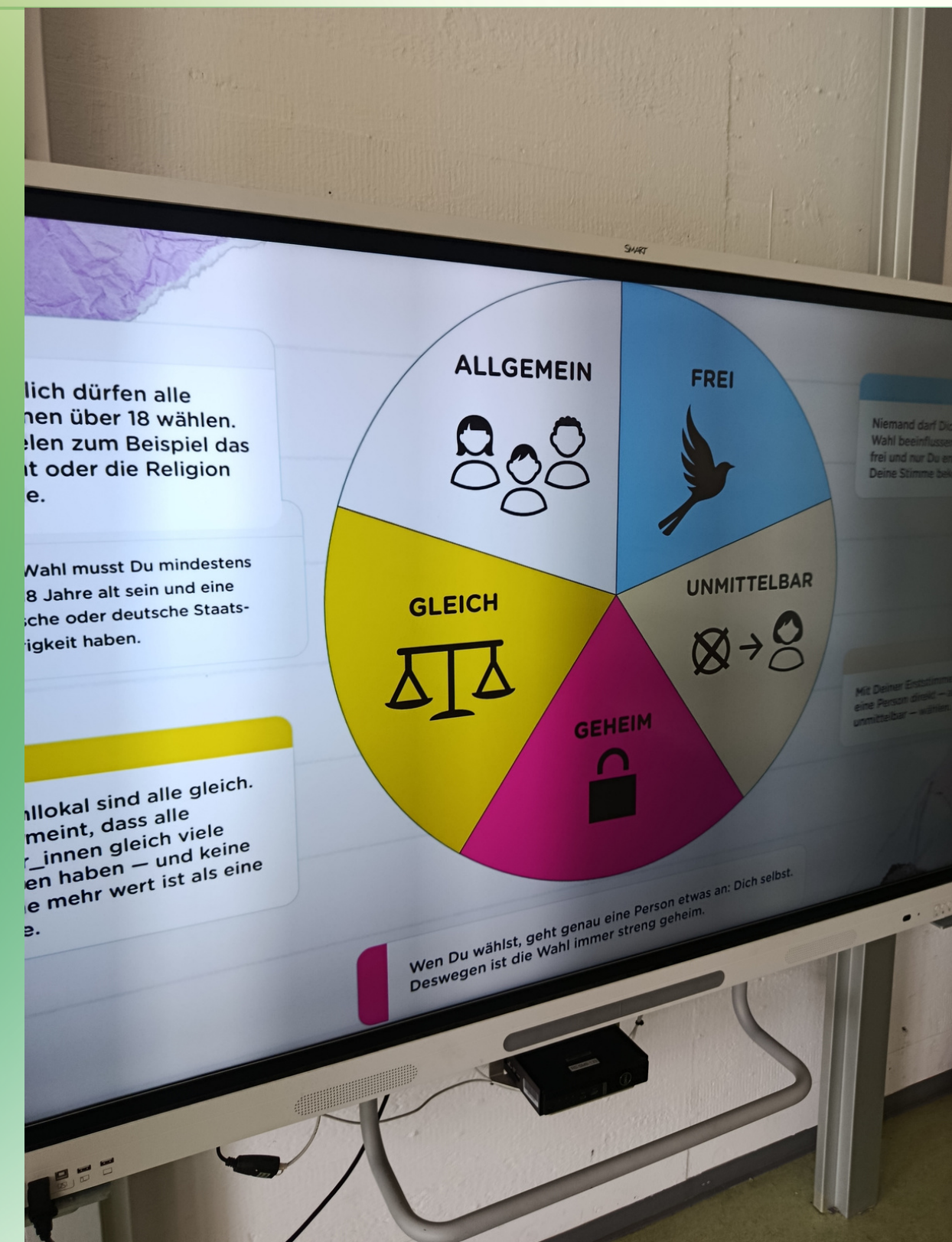
Overall results of the vote

Low Budget	Votes	High Budget	Votes
Bean bag chairs	164	Outdoor gym	328
Benches	83	Snack vending machine	284
More pictures in the school building	77	Small football goals	13
Sunshade	28	Study corner	9
Flowers	19	Mural	7
More pictures/art in the building	9	Drinking fountain	6

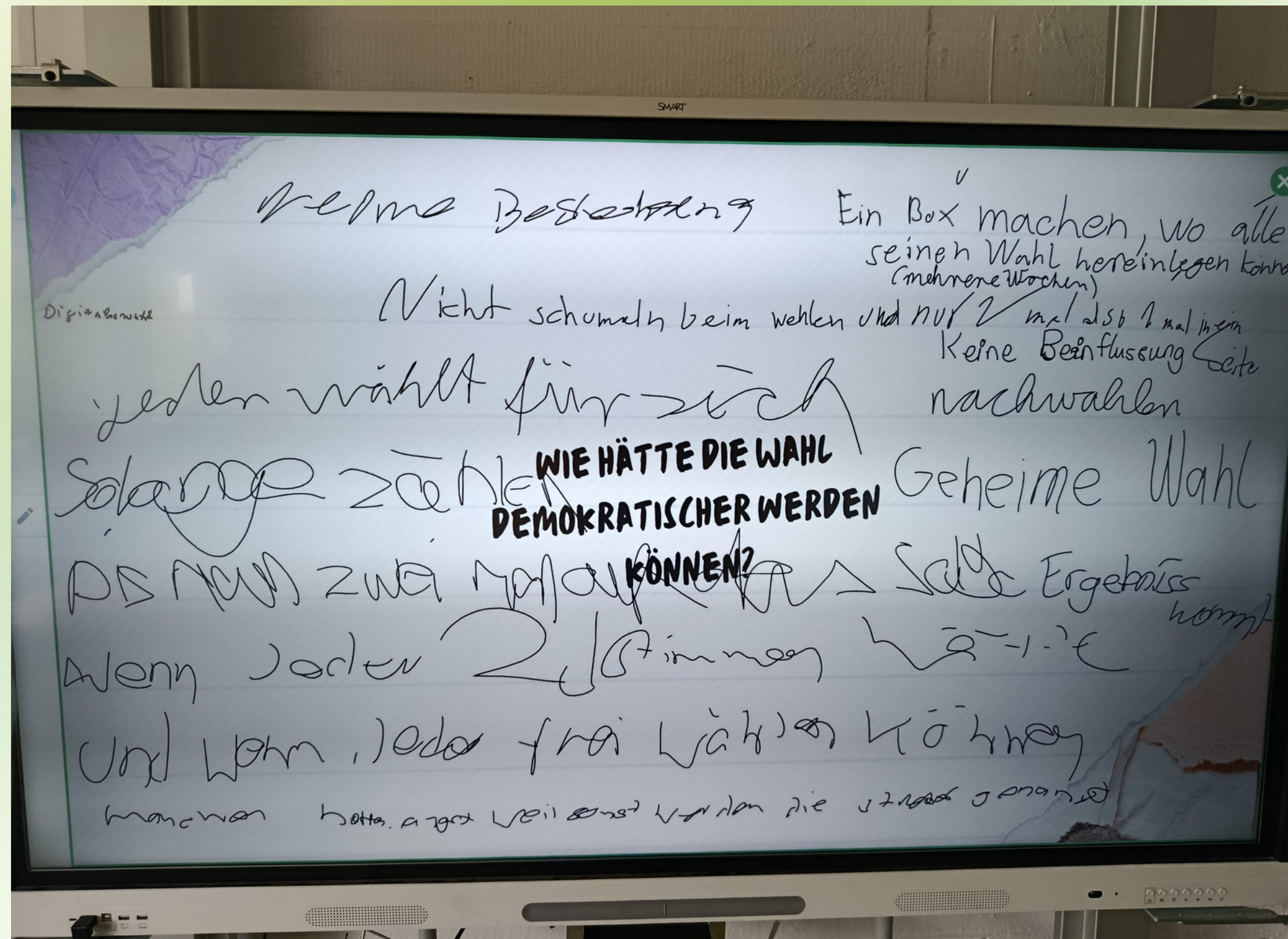
Critical reflection on the Democratic Nature of the Voting Process



Referring to voting principles discussed in the context of the Baden-Württemberg state election, the class reflected on how democratic their own voting process was.

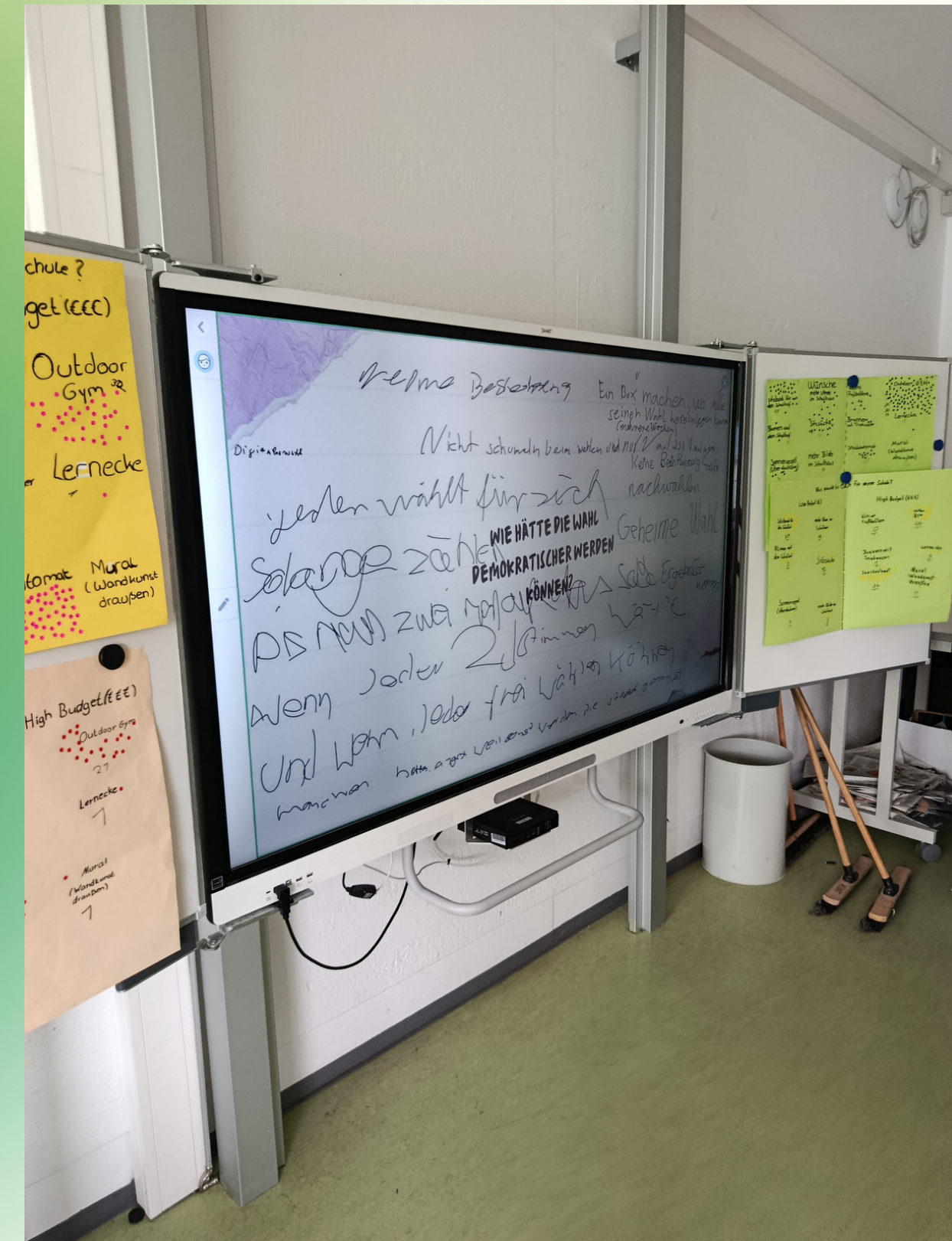


Critical reflection on the Democratic Nature of the Voting Process



Critical reflection on the Democratic Nature of the Voting Process

- Students identified aspects for improvement and discussed how the process could have been made more democratic.
- Suggestions included a secret ballot to reduce peer pressure and more time for informed decision-making (deliberation).
- Further issues included possible manipulation (e.g. multiple votes) and unequal access to participation due to absence, timetable constraints, or the fact that teachers ended the voting process before all students had cast their vote.



Critical reflection on the Democratic Nature of the Voting Process

Although—or perhaps precisely because—the voting process was not fully democratic, it provided a valuable learning opportunity to understand and reflect on democratic processes. The students greatly enjoyed the project and worked with high motivation, energy, and enthusiasm.

Presentation of Results

Due to some shifts in the project phases and limited time caused by school trips, the final phase, during which the top ideas are presented to the school administration and decisions are made regarding their implementation, has not yet been carried out.