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Stakeholders' Perceptions and Experiences of Learners' Involvement in Democratic School Governance in South Africa

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ABSTRACT This is a qualitative study that used interviews and observations in two provinces of South Africa. The investigation considered the views of various stakeholders of school governing of different focus groups at schools in two provinces of South Africa. The study explored the actual or theoretical involvement of learners in School Governing Bodies (SGBs); what barriers exist to learner participation; the key issue of training for learner involvement and whether SGBs have contributed to the development of democracy in South African schools. The findings suggest that despite being afforded a full role in school governance by post-apartheid educational policy, learners do not always play their part in school decision-making. While learner participation in SGBs in South Africa offers considerable potential for both school improvement and making a contribution to the deepening and consolidation of democracy in South Africa, there is much work still to be done.