



# HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES

## STATE OF MICHIGAN

### Appropriations Requests for Legislatively Directed Spending Items

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1. The sponsoring representative's first name:  
Regina
2. The sponsoring representative's last name:  
Weiss
3. The cosponsoring representatives' names. All cosponsors must be listed. If none, please type 'n/a.' A signed letter from the sponsor approving the co-sponsorship and a signed letter from the member wishing to co-sponsor are required. Attach letters at question #9 below.  
Representatives Carol Glanville and Tyrone Carter
4. Name of the entity that the spending item is intended for:  
Education at Scale Foundation
5. Physical address of the entity that the spending item is intended for:  
600 River Place Drive Ste. 6614 Detroit, MI 48207
6. If there is not a specific recipient, the intended location of the project or activity:  
School districts across the state.
7. Name of the representative and the district number where the legislatively directed spending item is located:  
The pilot would take place in several school districts across the state.
8. Purpose of the legislatively directed spending item. Please include how it provides a public benefit and why it is an appropriate use of taxpayer funding. Please also demonstrate that the item does not violate Article IV, S 30 of the Michigan Constitution. This initiative seeks to reduce violence in our communities by giving young people the tools to better listen and understand each other as well as how to solve interpersonal conflicts when they arise. It is an innovative approach to reduce violence and empower young people.
9. Attach documents here if needed:  
Attachments added to the end of this file.
10. The amount of state funding requested for the legislatively directed spending item.

2500000

11. Has the legislatively directed spending item previously received any of the following types of funding? Check all that apply.

["State"]

12. Please select one of the following groups that describes the entity requesting the legislatively directed spending item:

Non-profit organization

13. For a non-profit organization, has the organization been operating within Michigan for the preceding 36 months?

Yes

14. For a non-profit organization, has the entity had a physical office within Michigan for the preceding 12 months?

Yes

15. For a non-profit organization, does the organization have a board of directors?

Yes

16. For a non-profit organization, list all the active members on the organization's board of directors and any other officers. If this question is not applicable, please type 'n/a.'

Dr. Erica Robertson, CEO, Education at Scale; CEO, Adventures Publishing House Robert Thornton, Vice-chair, Education at Scale Foundation; Retired, Former Senior Program Director, Skillman Foundation Hannelore van der Vorst, Treasurer, Education at Scale Foundation; Senior Finance Director, Nike Europe Christy Harris, Secretary, Education at Scale Foundation; Dean of Regional Programs, Relay Graduate School of Education Jessica Natasja Bieshaar; Senior Director, EMEA Nike Direct Acceleration Kelly Wright Henrion; President, Wright Henrion Group Suzanne Hilton-Esaki; VP, Nike Transformation Change Mainu Kalita; Global Head, AWS Experienced Based Exhilaration, Amazon Dr. Karlin James Tichenor; Founder and CEO, Karlin J & Associates Eoin Wallace; Sr. Director Philips Global Project Management Practice

17. "I certify that neither the sponsoring representative nor the sponsoring representative's staff or immediate family has a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in the legislatively directed spending item."

Yes, this is correct

18. Anticipated start and end dates for the legislatively directed spending item:

October 1, 2025-September 30, 2027

19. "I hereby certify that all information provided in this request is true and accurate."

Yes



## VIRTUAL REALITY YOUTH PEACE LITERACY INITIATIVE

### *Literally Changing the Game.*



#### Collaborators



EDUCATION  
AT SCALE  
FOUNDATION  
EQUITY • EDUCATION • TRANSFORMATION



We must empower our young people to **STOP THE VIOLENCE.**

- Virtual Reality Youth Peace Literacy Initiative (VR-YPLI) is pioneering the future of **educational empowerment**. This initiative is an **immersive learning** experience where our youth don't just play—they **create, engage, grow, and enact change**. This work equips our youth not just as participants, but as **leaders and advocates** for peace.
- VR-YPLI provides a platform where young people share their **authentic narratives** and **dilemmas** and work together to **develop their peace literacy skills** like **empathy, listening, and problem-solving**, etc., to navigate their social dilemmas. Young people learn their peace **literacy skills** are their true **superpowers** necessary to forge a path toward **non-violence** and **positive mental health** in their **schools** and in their **communities**.
- As tomorrow's **peace ambassadors** and **change agents**, **students** are **co-designing curriculum** with the goal of **shaping state-level policies** and practices in education that impact their lives, ensuring that their **voices** are not only heard but are also integral in **driving sustainable change**.

The Virtual Reality Youth Peace Literacy Initiative (VR-YPLI) is an innovative approach to:



Decrease violence  
in schools



Increase  
mental health



Foster peace-  
building skills



Support healthy  
brain development



Advance  
literacy

## FY 2025 STATE APPROPRIATION APPROVED OCT 2024–SEP 2025



Research and Development

Students

Families

Teachers



### \$500,000 FUNDING

The State of Michigan has demonstrated its commitment to this innovative work by allocating foundational funding for the Virtual Reality Youth Peace Literacy Initiative in the 2025 State Appropriations budget. This partnership underscores a significant endorsement of our initiative, signaling the state's recognition of its value and the profound impact it can have. Such support not only validates the groundbreaking nature of our work but also amplifies its potential to transform educational policies, practices, and outcomes across the state.

Specifically funds will be used for:

Co-Design Virtual Reality Gaming Curriculum with Students	
Onboarding 4–6 schools statewide; this includes identifying school partners and students, facilitating workshops and providing technical training for students, co-authoring 4–6 peace literacy superhero books, and co-designing 2–4 virtual reality gaming curriculum modules, tailored with students' authentic experiences	\$161,000
Teacher & School Support	
Training, compensating, and supporting teachers/facilitators at each school who will serve as our partners and liaisons; providing technology, curriculum, and tools	\$126,000
Parent Engagement	
Parent training/workshops & seminars	\$30,000
Transportation, Field Trips, Meals, & Other Fun	
Covering transportation, field trips, meals, and other incentives to engage, educate, and support students and their families	\$75,000
Prototype Iteration, Research, & Evaluation	
Research and development to further the pilot's effectiveness and reach and prototype's functionality; developmental evaluations	\$108,000
TOTAL	\$500,000

**Deliverables:** Common Core-Aligned Turnkey Peace Literacy Framework and Curriculum, 4–6 Peace Literacy Books, 2–4 Virtual Reality Gaming Modules

### FY2026–FY2027

## 2-YEAR BUDGET ASK (HIGH LEVEL)



The Total \$2.5M Ask Supports The Two-Year Virtual Reality Youth Peace Literacy Initiative Pilot—Statewide.

Research and Development: \$1M

School Support: \$750K

Family Support: \$750K

# VR Youth Peace Literacy Initiative the pilot program

## WHAT

### YEAR 1 (2024–2025)

- **Development of VR Curriculum:** Initiate the Virtual Reality Youth Peace Literacy Initiative with the development of an immersive, interactive learning experience tailored to integrate into existing educational frameworks.
- **Partnerships with Schools and Districts:** Establish partnerships with schools and school districts across the state to pilot the VR curriculum and gather initial feedback to inform further development.



### YEAR 2–3 (2025–2027)

- **Implementation and Pilot Testing:** Roll out the pilot program across partnered schools, closely monitoring its execution and gathering comprehensive data on its impact.
- **Policy Influence and Integration:** Engage with educational policymakers to explore and advocate for the integration of VR-based peace literacy concepts into the state's educational standards.
- **Curriculum Refinement:** Refine the VR curriculum based on insights gained from the pilot phase and ongoing feedback from educational stakeholders.
- **Evaluate and Scale:** Systematically evaluate the pilot outcomes and adjust strategies for broader integration across state schools.

### FINAL OUTCOME (2028–)

- **Educational Standard Enhancement:** Aim to incorporate the refined VR curriculum into the Common Core standards, establishing a new benchmark for peace literacy education in Michigan, supported by robust policy enhancements.

## AFFORDABILITY & ACCESS

Collaborations with philanthropy, community organizations, educational institutions, and public libraries can help provide access to VR equipment and experiences for economically-disadvantaged youth.

## EVALUATION & EFFICACY

- Peace Education Evaluation Framework (PEEF) has been developed by the Global Campaign for Peace Education
- PEEF provides a comprehensive and holistic approach to evaluating peace education interventions
- We will utilize the PEEF, which will encompass three domains of evaluation: cognitive, affective, and behavioral outcomes

Contact Dr. Erica Robertson at  
[erica@educationatscale.org](mailto:erica@educationatscale.org)  
or 313-938-0746



## WHO

- Municipalities/Communities across the state of Michigan with recent/recurring violence in schools
- 15–20 elementary/middle schools
- 20–25 students per school cohort
- 3<sup>rd</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> graders

## HOW

- Facilitated by trained teachers/tutors/facilitators
- Transportation provided
- Curriculum
- Meals provided
- Games

## WHEN

- Afterschool Enrichment\*
- Summer Enrichment\*

\* The goal is to incorporate VR immersion in school curriculum after a successful pilot

## POVERTY & ENGAGEMENT

Engaging youth in learning is crucial for effective educational interventions, especially in the context of peace literacy. Poverty, however, presents a significant challenge to engaging marginalized youth. The VR Youth Peace Literacy Initiative will address poverty and engagement explicitly with:

- Enhanced immersion and interactivity (Gutiérrez-Maldonado et al., 2017)
- Gamification elements (Connolly et al., 2012)
- Mentorship and support (Zhang et al., 2019)

## PARENT ENGAGEMENT & SUPPORT

Engaging parents in VR immersive learning experiences for youth in high-poverty illiterate communities is crucial for maximizing the impact of educational interventions. By recognizing the importance of parental involvement, specifically, the VR-YPLI will provide:

- Transportation to and from VR after-school/summer programs
- Meals for young scholars and families who are in attendance
- Parent education and training focused on the benefits of parental involvement and effective strategies for supporting children's learning in peace literacy and VR environments

