

# שְׁלוֹמִים SHALOM

## Curriculum Project



Celebrating the rich tapestry of Jewish heritage, and fostering inclusive learning for all



Wisconsin Center for  
Education Research  
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



Wisconsin  
Evaluation  
Collaborative



Updates and Goals  
**2024-2025**



# SHALOM CURRICULUM PROJECT

Since ancient times, the Jewish people have been a diverse community, and this diversity continues today. The “Jewish Americans in 2020” Pew study found that 15% of Jews under the age of 30 identify as Hispanic, Black, Asian, other race, or multiracial—and that these groups face unique challenges. One such challenge is the dearth of Jewish educational play materials that reflect racial and ethnic diversity within the Jewish community.

At the same time, research findings in the fields of education, child development, and human ecology show that when children are exposed to materials that reflect their own racial and ethnic heritages as well as broader diversity, they show more positive outcomes. Shalom Curriculum Project (SCP) at University of Wisconsin–Madison (UW) is a diverse group of researchers, educators, and community members who have come together to address the need in Jewish early childhood education settings for materials that reflect and celebrate racial and ethnic diversity in the Jewish community.

We have prototyped educational play materials--a book, a doll, and tools that use music and diverse imaging--in alignment with research and best practices in the field. Over the next two years, we will be partnering with communities to engage with teachers and families and conduct new research.

Access the materials: <https://shalom.education.wisc.edu/request>





# 2024-2025 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

**SCP is nearing the end of its launch phase. We have set the following goals and objectives for the 2024-2025 school year:**

- Continue prototype and survey distribution
- Analyze survey data
- Co interpret data with community partners
- Update prototypes
- Develop and pilot teacher training
- Draft additional new prototypes
- Conduct new experimental research project on *Combating Antisemitism Through Celebrating Jewish Diversity* with Department of Psychology
- Publish academic article
- Continue presentations at national and international conferences





# RESEARCH, EVALUATION, AND EVIDENCE BASE

Current research and evidence-based practices show that a) highlighting diversity is good for child development, and b) highlighting diversity in a minority group can decrease discrimination against that group. SCP is conducting research and evaluation activities to investigate and apply these ideas in the field of Jewish education.

In this next period, SCP will:

- Replicate an experimental research study with colleagues from the UW-Madison Department of Psychology, to test our hypothesis that **highlighting diversity in the Jewish community can reduce antisemitism**
- Expand the SCP **knowledge base document**
- **Publish an academic article** on depictions of Africa and Africans in Jewish literature
- **Explore** opportunities for further research







# COMMUNITY VOICES: 7 THEMES

Shalom Curriculum Project has conducted interviews, focus groups, and other conversations to collect information on how community members understand and articulate the need for educational play materials that reflect Jewish diversity. Seven key themes have emerged in these conversations. Read more at

<https://go.wisc.edu/shalom7themes>

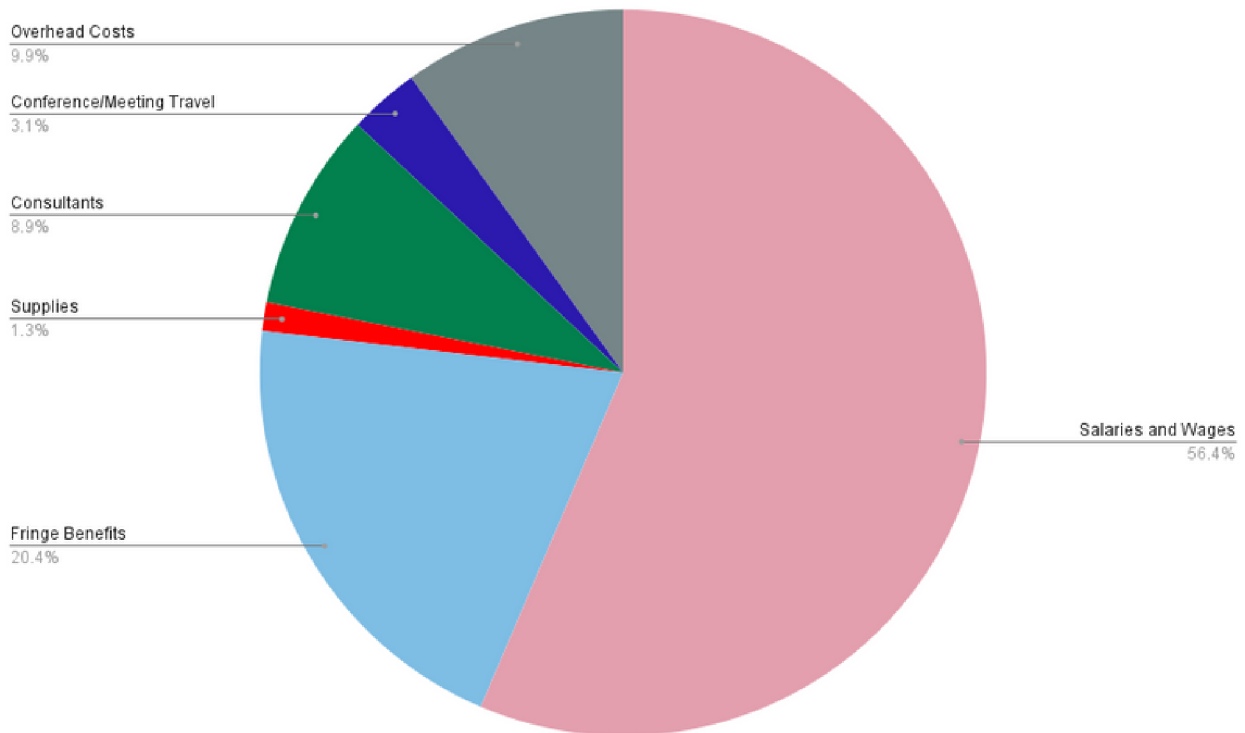
- 1 racism and marginalization
- 2 diversity as an asset
- 3 articulating the need
- 4 connecting diverse representation and positive youth outcomes
- 5 current school practices
- 6 educator needs
- 7 normalization of diversity as a vision for the future





# BUDGET

The cost to operate SCP for one year is about \$235,000. Our community-engaged scholarship project is funded entirely by grants and donations. The budget breakdown is shown below. For more information, see <https://go.wisc.edu/scp-budget>



# THE SHALOM TEAM

Our community-engaged team is bringing research on the connections between diversity and positive youth development to the field of Jewish education. Contact SCP Researcher and Coordinator Michal Avera Samuel to learn more, and get involved. [averasamuel@wisc.edu](mailto:averasamuel@wisc.edu)

Other team members include:



**MICHAL AVERA SAMUEL**  
Researcher/Coordinator



**SHAHANNA MCKINNEY-BALDON, CO-PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR**



**ANNALEE GOOD, PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR**



**ALLISON ALEXANDER WESTBROOK IV, ARTIST**

## SHALOM CURRICULUM PROJECT PARTNERS:

COALITION FOR JEWISH LEARNING | WISCONSIN EVALUATION COLLABORATIVE | COOPERATIVE CHILDREN'S BOOK CENTER | JEWS OF COLOR INITIATIVE | FARWELL FOUNDATION | KATZ KRANTZ FAMILY FOUNDATION | AMERICAN ENDOWMENT FOUNDATION | JOAN AND SETH ROSEN FAMILY FUND | THE IRVING HARRIS FOUNDATION | THE JEWISH COMMUNAL FUND







# Shalom שלום Curriculum Project

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