



Chief Executive Officer  
Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)  
Chicago, Illinois

## THE SEARCH

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) seeks a strategic, creative, and energetic leader to serve as its next Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Founded three decades ago, CASEL has been the leader of the social and emotional learning (SEL) movement since first introducing the term into the education lexicon. From its earliest days, CASEL has brought together a multidisciplinary network that includes researchers, practitioners, and policy experts from across the country and internationally who are committed to the advancement of SEL in Pre-K through Grade 12 education. CASEL conducts, commissions, and synthesizes research to inform the systemic implementation of high-quality, evidence-based SEL. Additionally, CASEL's work informs practices and policies at the state and federal level that support SEL implementation. A storied organization, CASEL has moved SEL from a promising theory to an essential part of education and continues to play an important leadership role in the SEL field through its multiple national and international initiatives and its high-quality and highly sought-after resources. The next CEO will join CASEL during a moment of shifting philanthropic winds for all education nonprofits and will bring strategic leadership and a steadfast belief in the transformative power of SEL to an organization looking to maintain its preeminence and authoritative voice in the field.

The next CEO will cement CASEL's role as the expert voice in vetting high-quality SEL programs, practices, and research, and advocating more broadly for SEL as a fundamental tenet of education. As the education landscape shifts, the CEO will seek new growth opportunities for the organization, implement and further evolve a newly defined strategic vision, and cultivate a collaborative, entrepreneurial, and supportive work culture.

CASEL has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm with expertise in higher education, K-12 education, and public policy, to assist in the recruitment of the Chief Executive Officer. All

applications, inquiries, and nominations, which will remain highly confidential, should be directed to Isaacson, Miller as indicated at the end of this document.

## ABOUT CASEL

CASEL defines SEL as the process through which all young people and adults: acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities; manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals; feel and show empathy for others; establish and maintain supportive relationships; and make responsible and caring decisions. As a nonprofit, nonpartisan leader in SEL, CASEL is uniquely positioned to evaluate programming, curate research, inform legislation, and partner on implementation with Districts and States. Its approach is informed by the belief that great movements are built when multiple, and sometimes competing, stakeholders collaborate to create strategic direction and continuously learn. CASEL's multidisciplinary collaborations produce rich insights, consequential impacts, and the strongest outcomes in support of children, adolescents, and educators. As the early leader of the field, CASEL has formed a community of SEL champions at every level—from classrooms to statehouses—and takes a three-pronged approach to its work of advancing SEL in education.

## Research

Through its research efforts, CASEL seeks to build a shared definition and knowledge around the field of SEL. Known for its SEL fundamentals, including its [SEL framework](#), CASEL's research arm creates a research foundation for communities to identify evidence-based SEL strategies best suited for their local contexts. Additionally, CASEL is widely known for its [program guide](#), designed to help educators and school administrators select those evidence-based SEL programs that best meet community needs. CASEL employs a [research-practice partnership](#) model to investigate the best processes for integrating rigorous research methodology with practical, actionable findings by and for practitioners. CASEL's Research Advisory Committee convenes leading SEL researchers from across the US to inform the organization's evidence-based approach.

Through the [CASEL Weissberg Scholars Program](#), CASEL provides mentorship and support to a new generation of early-career scholars and educators who embody a commitment to evidence-based SEL research and collaboration, advancing SEL in service of the positive development of children, families, and communities.

Finally, CASEL serves as the sponsor of the first journal dedicated to the field, [Social and Emotional Learning: Research, Practice, and Policy](#) (published by Elsevier), which has quickly become a leading international outlet for scholarship on the science, practice, and policy of SEL.

## Practice

CASEL translates research into action through resources such as its [District Resource Center](#) which helps school districts integrate SEL into education to help improve academic achievement, graduation, and attendance rates. Its workshops, such as the [Learning Together SEL Workshop](#), help education leaders implement SEL in their school communities. Finally, through its [SEL Fellows Academy](#), each year CASEL

brings together a national cohort of SEL leaders to deepen their SEL practice from the personal to the institutional level. In response to an increasing demand for SEL globally, CASEL has also established the [International SEL Fellows Academy](#), a two-year program designed to enhance a global understanding of SEL and empower leaders internationally to drive SEL-related change in their communities and beyond.

## Policy

CASEL works at the district, state, and federal level to advocate for and advance policies and practices that expand high-quality SEL implementation. Its levers include the [Collaborating States Initiative](#) and the [State Resource Center](#), through which the organization works with over 40 state education agencies to promote SEL policies and practices. CASEL also informs SEL policy at the federal level through congressional briefings and conversations, as well as through the National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development.

## ROLE OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

In recent years, CASEL has faced challenges to achieving its mission, including changes in the funding landscape at the philanthropic, federal, state, and district levels, as well as misinformation around the definition and scope of SEL. Some of these shifts have affected CASEL's impact and reach, and underscore the importance of identifying a new leader now who can clearly articulate the organization's path forward.

The CEO serves as CASEL's strategic and operational leader and will take the strong history and key ingredients of CASEL to propel the organization forward in the fulfillment of its mission. The CEO will be joined in this goal by a mission-driven staff of 22 and an esteemed board of directors, and will manage a budget of \$6-7 million annually, which is funded by a combination of philanthropic support and earned revenue. The CEO will be a decisive, action-oriented leader, flexible thinker, effective relationship builder, politically astute strategist, and unwavering champion of CASEL's mission. Despite the moment's political and financial headwinds, CASEL has many avenues of opportunity at its disposal, and the CEO will guide the organization in responding to the following key priorities for the organization:

## KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE CEO

### ***Ensure CASEL remains the preeminent leader in social and emotional learning in education***

Since its inception, CASEL has been a trusted name in education. In recent years, due to changes in funding, CASEL has had to slow or trim some of its sought-after resources, including its diagnostic toolkit as well as its district, school, program, and assessment guides. The new CEO will work with leadership and staff to review, refresh, and/or build new assets that guide teachers, schools, districts, and states on reputable SEL resources, initiatives, and practices.

The CEO will embrace CASEL's history of melding research, practice, and policy to cement its position as the guiding voice in research-backed and evidence-based SEL efforts. The CASEL name has historically set

a standard for high-quality SEL programs and resources, and the CEO, in partnership with the board and entire CASEL team, will fortify the organization's trusted identity in the field.

### ***Advocate for social and emotional learning as a fundamental tenet of education***

CASEL and its partners are steadfast in their belief that SEL is an essential part of schooling and learning. Since CASEL's founding, SEL has grown in popularity, widely embraced across the US and, more recently, internationally. Despite SEL's steady adoption and acceptance, there remains a need for the story of SEL and its benefits to be told. Alongside the board of directors, the CEO will work to take control of the narrative around SEL with a scientific and evidence-based approach. More importantly, the CEO will lead senior staff in translating the research and science around SEL in practical and digestible ways to keep audiences such as teachers, administrators, families, and policymakers apprised of SEL best practices.

### ***Chart a path toward long-term financial sustainability***

The CEO will solidify the value proposition of SEL not just to the public but also to funders to advance the work of CASEL. To diversify its finances, CASEL has begun to expand further into fee-for-service work, which may be another area for the next CEO to explore further. The CEO will help CASEL solidify its financial model and sustainability plan and will cultivate diverse revenue streams to achieve long-term economic sustainability.

### ***Attract critical talent and establish a strong culture***

CASEL's staff is deeply dedicated to the organization's mission and work. Recent departures and other staff changes have generated some instability across the team, and the new CEO will be charged with making key leadership hires and determining the best organizational structure to support the long-term development, retention, and morale of all staff. The CEO will be dedicated to transparency in communication, advance a culture of cross-team collaboration, welcome diverse viewpoints into conversation, and employ a strong sense of emotional intelligence to solidify a culture of respect, humility, and openness to new ideas.

Additionally, the CEO will work closely with the board of directors, support board operations and governance, and maintain effective partnerships that leverage the expertise of all board members.

### ***Implement a new strategic plan with fidelity to CASEL's mission***

Over the past year, the staff, leadership, and board have worked carefully to develop a new strategic plan for CASEL. The next CEO will be charged with review and implementation of this plan, adjusting the plan as needed to meet the needs of the organization, and establishing key performance indicators and metrics to measure progress and success.

## QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The successful candidate will hold an advanced degree in education or related fields and bring executive leadership and management experience to effectively lead a storied organization. While no individual will possess all qualifications in equal measure, the successful candidate will bring many of the following experiences to this role:

- Proven ability to think strategically and entrepreneurially, translating vision into actionable plans and measurable outcomes;
- Demonstrated respect for and understanding of research-informed education policy and practice in the field of SEL, plus knowledge of the K-12 education sector at national, state, and local levels;
- Extensive experience in philanthropy and fundraising with a proven ability to cultivate, secure, and expand significant philanthropic support from a diverse stream of funders;
- Demonstrated skill in identifying and growing mission-aligned new revenue streams as well as optimizing existing lines of business; success in developing and executing strategic business plans that drive organizational growth, sustainability, and impact;
- Familiarity with national and regional education policy, priorities, and funding streams;
- Ability to engage meaningfully with diverse stakeholders across varied and complex environments, with appreciation for different, and sometimes conflicting, opinions and interests;
- An articulate, compelling, and persuasive public presence, capable of effectively and enthusiastically delivering CASEL's mission and message to a wide range of stakeholders;
- A natural collaborator skilled at engaging diverse individuals and institutions to co-create solutions and foster partnerships;
- A commitment to maintaining a positive and supportive work culture;
- Demonstrated ability to build consensus and to listen deeply and collaborate effectively with people with wide ranging and varied viewpoints about education and human development;;
- Track record of leading a remote, high-performing workforce that values input from staff, board members, partners, and other external stakeholders;
- Skilled at supporting effective non-profit governance and leveraging board leadership and expertise toward the organization's strategic goals;
- Passionate commitment to educational excellence for all students.

## COMPENSATION AND LOCATION

The estimated salary range for this position is \$250,000 to \$325,000, with final compensation based on experience and qualifications. While CASEL is based in Chicago, this position is primarily remote with the understanding that occasional in-person meetings may be necessary to maintain alignment and team cohesion.

## APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and CVs with cover letters should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website at the link below. Electronic submission of materials is strongly encouraged.

<https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/collaborative-academic-social-and-emotional-learning-casel/chief-executive-officer>

Katie Rockman, Partner and Ericka Miller, President + CEO

Diana Carmona, Senior Associate

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Isaacson, Miller

*This document has been prepared based on the information provided by CASEL. The material presented in this leadership profile should be relied on for informational purposes only. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the original source documents and information provided by CASEL would supersede any conflicting information in this document.*