An Invitation to apply for the position of

Vice President of Policy
Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning

The field of education is experiencing a moment of unprecedented opportunity to advance policies designed to support social and emotional learning (SEL), and equity and excellence. For example:

- As a result of the pandemic and our national reckoning on systemic racism in the last year, education has experienced serious disruptions, all of which are elevating the importance of SEL (e.g., Volume 2 Roadmap to Reopening Safely and Meeting All Students’ Needs).
- The $123 billion infusion to K-12 education in the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act now offers a critical opportunity to invest in systemic approaches to social and emotional learning (SEL) that fully support students and schools through the pandemic and beyond.
- In addition, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act will be reauthorized this year, which will likely make additional funds available for workforce preparation efforts that support social and emotional development.

In light of this moment, CASEL is creating a Vice President of Policy position in order to maximize the opportunity to support federal and state policy makers as they develop high quality standards, guidance, and other policies to support SEL.

Summary of CASEL’s Vice President of Policy Position

The Vice President of Policy will report to the President and CEO and provide strategic leadership for all of CASEL’s federal and state initiatives designed to advance evidence-based, equity-focused SEL. Specifically, CASEL’s Vice President of Policy will provide leadership to:

1. Articulate a clear vision and develop a strategic plan for CASEL’s policy work to support SEL at both the federal and state levels. CASEL’s policy team has made a recent commitment to emphasize integration of SEL with career and workforce development as a primary strategy for helping all students become future ready, and the Vice President of Policy will help elaborate and develop this new strategic focus. The Vice President of Policy will also lead implementation of that vision and plan going forward.

2. Cultivate and support strategic relationships and lead collaboration with partners in key national organizations to monitor and support federal and state policy efforts, and to enhance policy team goals.

3. Provide leadership and direction for CASEL’s federal policy efforts, coordinating with consulting partners to meet CASEL’s related goals (including as a liaison between CASEL’s Board and consulting partners in order to develop and lead in federal policy efforts). This will include
focusing strategically on the appropriations process and also monitoring major legislation (e.g., educator preparation through the Higher Education Reauthorization Act; various provisions in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act now known as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Both the Higher Education Reauthorization Act and ESSA are up for reauthorization.

4. Provide leadership and direction for CASEL’s Collaborating States Initiative which launched in 2016 with 8 states and is now working with 43 states.
   a. The CSI is designed to support state working groups (usually in state education agencies) in all 50 states through (1) development and ongoing refinement of strategic tools and resources (e.g., CASEL’s state theory of action), (2) monthly zoom convenings, coaching calls (as requested), and (3) reviews of state standards, guidance, and other policies as they are being developed. In addition, in response to ARP the CSI is now mobilizing to strategically support states in how to use federal funds to advance evidence-based SEL.
   b. The CSI shares information with chief state school officers (e.g., we host quarterly conversations on SEL moderated by Gene Wilhoit). The Vice President of Policy will have primary responsibility for managing relationships with state education chiefs, and for leading development of resources to support them, particularly around ARP funding in the near term.

5. Provide leadership as CASEL expands the Collaborating States Initiative to advance SEL in Career and Workforce Development, which launched in 2020 in 8 states, and this year will begin inviting additional states to join. Together with our national and state partners in the initiative we have produced a developmental framework for organizing the work. In collaboration with Civic, Inc. and the Coalition for Career Development, the CSI will begin sharing learnings from the 8-state initiative with all 50 states in October 2021. Specifically, the CASEL policy team will release a groundbreaking report with policy recommendations, case studies to describe how the work is advancing in three individual states, and a suite of tools and resources to support other states in advancing this work.

6. Provide leadership in the development and execution of CASEL's plans for evaluating the CSI.

7. Provide leadership in CASEL’s State Policy Scans. The purpose of the CASEL State Scans (which began in 2010) is to assess the development of SEL competencies, standards, policies, and guidelines, preschool through high school, in all 50 states. Over time the scans have expanded, and our analysis has focused on key questions. For example, going forward the state scans will include analysis of policies to advance integration of SEL and workforce. In addition, we plan to monitor the guidance states develop for ARP funding, as well as how states are tracking expenditures, to assess the extent to which funding is supporting high quality, equity-focused SEL.

The Vice President of Policy will provide strategic direction and leadership for all of the efforts above, working closely with CASEL leadership to develop and oversee multiple policy initiatives to advance efforts designed to inform and implement federal and state policy for SEL. The Vice President of Policy will be supported by CASEL’s Senior Scientist who has to this point helped to lead the CSI and CASEL’s state policy scans. The Vice President of Policy also will help build and develop the CASEL policy team, which will include hiring a new director to supervise CSI staff and coaches to ensure coherence and consistency across all work streams.

Key Functions
Under the direction of CASEL’s CEO, the Vice President of Policy will:

1. Help design and lead all of the activities of CASEL’s federal and state policy work, including CASEL’s CSI and State Scorecard Project, as well as intersections with federal policy. In addition, identify and provide relevant and latest SEL research, data, and materials for use in all federal and state policy efforts.
   a. At the federal level:
      i. Work collaboratively with consulting partners through ongoing communication and regularly scheduled calls focused on updates of congressional activities and action needed.
      ii. Strategically plan and coordinate Hill visits with BPAG to meet with members and staffers of key committees in the House and Senate and other potential SEL champions in Congress or the DOE.
      iii. Strategically plan and coordinate with consulting partners to schedule one Hill briefing on key issues each year. Identify presenters and materials needed.
      iv. Seek approval for CASEL’s participation in sign on letters.
      v. Determine CASEL’s representation on key influencing national coalitions in coordination with consulting partners.
      vi. Develop CASEL’s national network, state by state, of advocates to influence federal policy
   b. At the state level:
      i. Oversee the broader CSI team as they provide direct support to states in the CSI, and help reach all 50 states
      ii. Provide leadership and direction for national scans of state policies, standards, and guidance. Collaborate with the policy team to synthesize learning in co-authored reports, resources and tools.
      iii. Represent the CSI at national and state-level meetings and serve as the first point of contact for new states interested in joining the CSI.

2. Collaborate with CASEL’s Development team to secure funding for all policy work going forward.

3. Collaborate with the CASEL’s Communication team to lead development and dissemination of tools, resources, briefs, reports webinars and other presentations concerning CASEL’s state work.

4. Collaborate with CASEL’s Practice team to develop a plan for bi-directional information exchange and development of education tools across districts and states to support implementation of evidence-based SEL. The Vice President of Policy will work to foster strategic connections between CASEL’s state and district work and build relationships with other CASEL teams, including practice, equity, and assessment, to help identify opportunities for collaboration.

5. Collaborate with CASEL’s Research team to develop a plan for evaluating the CSI, and also provide leadership on the refinement and implementation of systems to track both CSI team activities and state progress against a developmental continuum in order to monitor CSI progress and support continuous improvement of team activities.

6. Collaborate with CASEL’s Operations team to develop a plan and learning agenda for all convenings of state teams and chief state school officers going forward (e.g., national sessions as part of the CASEL Exchange, virtual convenings, etc.), and help lead all CSI convenings, especially convenings with chief state school officers.
Qualifications

1. Demonstrated expertise in SEL and policy.
2. Deep knowledge and extensive experience working to advance federal and state education policies.
3. Strategic thinker.
4. Leader in national education policy, with extensive experience leading policy at a national/state education organization, a national policy organization, and/or think tanks.
5. An authoritative voice with national and state leaders.
6. Excellent social and emotional skills, a commitment to equity in all its forms, and a passion for personal and professional growth in these areas.
7. Excellent written communication skills, and experience writing for multiple audiences, including practical briefs for education influencers, policy documents/briefs, and/or peer-reviewed research journals.
8. Comfortable in the national spotlight, including with state and national media outlets.
9. Clear communicator and strong public speaker.
10. Flexible, proactive, resilient, solutions-oriented and dedicated to continuous improvement.
11. A collaborative spirit and ability to direct multiple complex streams of work.
12. Graduate degree or equivalent professional experience preferred.

Physical Requirements

1. Prolonged periods sitting at a desk and working on a computer.
2. Must be able to lift up to 15 pounds at times.
3. Must be able to travel throughout the country.

Compensation

This is a full time, exempt, benefits eligible position. CASEL offers competitive salaries commensurate with experience and certifications.

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning is an equal opportunity employer. CASEL evaluates applicants for employment on the basis of qualifications, merit and work-related criteria without regard to race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, sexual orientation, mental or physical disabilities, pregnancy, medical condition, marital status or any other characteristic protected by law. CASEL employs and values a diverse work environment.

To apply, please submit a cover letter and resume that includes references to careers@casel.org. Please include the position title in the subject line of your email, and in your cover letter, mention where you heard of this position.