

Executive Search - Executive Director, Los Alamitos, CA - Hybrid

Sterling Search Inc. has been exclusively retained to recruit for the **Executive Director (ED)** for the **Los Alamitos Education Foundation (LAEF)**: <https://www.laef4kids.org/>

Enhancing Educational Excellence

LAEF is the non-profit partner of Los Alamitos Unified School District. We provide enrichment classes and grants that benefit EVERY STUDENT, at every level, in every school. After-School and Summer Enrichment Classes inspire students, unlock passion, and keep them learning.

Mission:

To build durable relationships that help fund our vision, share our knowledge, and prepare every child in our district for college and beyond.

Vision:

LAEF is the trusted partner through which the community engages with the Los Alamitos Unified School District to measurably improve student achievement results. LAEF provides both significant funding to the district in critical areas impacting all students, and educational enrichment opportunities for every student.

LAEF is a thriving 501(c)(3) nonprofit with approximately \$2 million in annual revenue and \$1.2 million in reserves, reflecting both financial stability and strong stewardship. The organization is supported by a dedicated, cohesive Board of Directors—each member personally invested as a donor—alongside a high-performing team deeply committed to advancing its mission.

At its core, LAEF is a beloved cornerstone of the community—embraced by families, trusted by district leadership, and supported by the broader business community. In a district that ranks among the lowest in per-pupil state funding in Orange County, LAEF plays a critical and indispensable role in ensuring students have access to enriched educational opportunities. This collective commitment underscores LAEF's reputation as a true community treasure with rigorous academics and award winning arts programs.

Complementing these efforts, recent bond measures have enabled the modernization of school facilities, creating a powerful intersection of enhanced learning environments and programmatic excellence. Together, these strengths position LAEF for continued growth, impact, and deeper community engagement.

LAEF has been guided by a long-serving and dedicated Executive Director whose leadership has positioned the organization as a strong, stable, and highly respected community asset. Building on this legacy, LAEF is seeking a new Executive Director who will embrace its values and vision while leading the organization into its next phase of growth and expanded impact.

While the majority of LAEF's funding is generated through earned revenue—with approximately \$400,000 raised annually through fundraising—there is a compelling opportunity to further diversify

and strengthen its philanthropic portfolio. With such a solid foundation already in place, the next leader has the opportunity to thoughtfully build and expand fundraising efforts, elevating individual and institutional giving to support sustained growth and long-term community impact.

This is a rare opportunity for a visionary nonprofit executive with a demonstrated track record of building diversified fundraising portfolios to lead the organization into its next phase of growth and impact.

Position Summary

The Los Alamitos Education Foundation (LAEF) seeks a strategic, community-centered Executive Director to lead a high-performing education nonprofit that serves as the sole nonprofit partner to the Los Alamitos Unified School District.

LAEF delivers enrichment programming and critical funding that benefits every student, at every level, across all schools, through a hybrid model of fee-based programs and philanthropic support.

The Executive Director will lead a mature and growing organization that operates after-school and summer enrichment programs at scale and funds grants, mental health initiatives, and innovation across all campuses.

This role requires a dynamic, multi-faceted leader who can:

- Oversee a complex program delivery organization, including classes, instructors, and logistics
- Serve as the chief fundraiser and community ambassador, driving philanthropic growth
- Provide strong nonprofit organizational leadership

The Executive Director works in close partnership with the Board, district leadership, donors, and community stakeholders to expand access, increase impact, and ensure long-term financial sustainability for LAEF.

Key Responsibilities:

Organizational Leadership & Strategy

- Lead execution of LAEF's mission to enhance educational excellence and improve student outcomes across the district
- Partner with the Board of Directors to drive strategic planning, growth, and long-term sustainability
- Balance earned revenue (program fees) with contributed revenue (donations, grants, sponsorships)

Program Oversight & Growth

- Oversee all LAEF programs, including:
 1. After-school enrichment programs
 2. Summer Enrichment Institute (SEI), serving hundreds of students annually
 3. Camps, clinics, and specialty classes led by independent contractors
- Ensure programs are high-quality, financially viable, and aligned with district priorities
- Expand access through scholarships and inclusive programming

Fundraising & Revenue Development

- Serve as chief fundraiser, leading all development efforts including:
 1. Individual giving (including Leadership Circle donors)
 2. Corporate partnerships and sponsorships
 3. Grants and institutional funding\Signature fundraising events
- Grow major donor programs and deepen community investment
- Build “durable relationships” that sustain long-term funding pipelines

Community Engagement & External Relations

- Act as the public face of LAEF in the community
- Cultivate strong relationships with Parents and families, Local businesses and sponsors, Civic and philanthropic organizations
- Strengthen LAEF’s visibility and brand as a trusted education partner

District Partnership & Stakeholder Alignment

- Maintain close collaboration with district leadership, principals, and educators
- Ensure LAEF programs directly support school-site needs, including: STEAM initiatives, Mental health and wellness support, Instructional enrichment and innovation funding

Team & Operations Management

- Lead and develop a small, high-impact staff team and large seasonal workforce
- Oversee instructors, vendors, and program staff across multiple school sites
- Ensure operational excellence across scheduling, staffing, compliance, and logistics

Marketing & Communications

- Oversee marketing strategy to drive program enrollment and donor engagement
- Manage communications across digital platforms, newsletters, and community outreach
- Support storytelling that demonstrates impact and drives giving

Financial Management & Compliance

- Develop and manage annual budget, ensuring both program profitability and mission investment
- Oversee financial reporting, forecasting, and resource allocation with the assistance of an outsourced bookkeeping/CPA
- Ensure compliance with nonprofit, school district, and state requirements

Ideal Candidate Profile The ideal candidate reflects a blend of education leadership, nonprofit management, and fundraising expertise.

Required Qualifications:

- 6+ years of progressive leadership experience in nonprofit, education, or related sector
- Proven success in fundraising and donor development
- Experience managing programs, staff, and multi-site operations
- Strong relationship-builder with the ability to engage diverse stakeholders
- Demonstrated ability to balance mission impact with financial sustainability

Highly Valued Experience:

- Background in education (teaching, school leadership, or district collaboration)
- Experience running fee-based programs or earned revenue models
- Active involvement in professional or community organizations (e.g., fundraising or civic groups)
- Grant writing and program development expertise
- Experience supporting STEAM, enrichment, or youth development initiatives

Leadership Competencies:

- Strategic and execution-oriented
- Community-connected and highly visible
- Entrepreneurial with a growth mindset

- Operationally strong and detail-oriented
- Mission-driven with a focus on student impact and access

Compensation

This position offers an annual salary of **\$150,000 to \$180,000**, based upon qualifications and experience and benefits that include 6 sick days, 17 holidays and 12+ days of vacation time, 403B with 3% match. Health Insurance fully paid by LAEF with optional dental at employee cost.

TO APPLY PLEASE CONTACT:

- Sarah Agee: sarah@sterlingsearchinc.com or 949-903-2891

OR APPLY THROUGH THE LINK BELOW:

- <https://www.sterlingsearchinc.com/cs/laef-ed>

Direct all correspondence emails and telephone calls to Sterling Search, Inc. Any resumes sent or telephone calls made to Los Alamitos Education Foundation will be redirected to Sterling Search, Inc.

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