

Executive Director

IDEA Greater Cincinnati

The senior regional leader of IDEA Greater Cincinnati — accountable for student outcomes, enrollment growth, financial sustainability, and community presence, and a full member of the IPS leadership team.

REPORTS TO

National Executive Director,
IPS Enterprises

LOCATION

Full-time, on-site
Cincinnati, Ohio

TRAVEL

Up to 10%
outside the region



ROLE OVERVIEW

A region to own — and a mandate to grow it.

The Executive Director (ED) is the senior regional leader of IDEA Greater Cincinnati, accountable for **student outcomes, enrollment growth, staff performance, financial sustainability, and community presence** across the region's schools. The role sits at the intersection of regional ownership and organizational membership: the ED runs the region and does so as part of IPS.

The ED reports to the National Executive Director of IPS Enterprises and serves as the primary liaison to the IDEA Greater Cincinnati Board of Directors, the state authorizer, and the broader Cincinnati community. The two mandates below define the work — and the region's long-term future depends on both.

THE DEFINING OPERATIONAL CHALLENGE

**~1,100 → 1,800+
students**

Grow the region over four years — a prerequisite for the region's long-term financial sustainability.

THE DEFINING ACADEMIC CHALLENGE

**Earn 4.5 Stars
by 2030**

Dramatically accelerate academic performance to ensure continued eligibility for Quality School Funding.

This role is not designed to maintain the status quo. The next ED will take a young region from startup to proof point: full campuses, top-tier academic results, a balanced budget, and a leadership bench strong enough to sustain all three. The leader who does this will have built something few education leaders ever get to build — and will have done it with the model, resources, and backing of one of the nation's most successful school networks.

But the work does not happen in the abstract. It happens in Cincinnati — a growing city with deep civic pride, a resilient economy, and an urgent need for great schools on its west side.

A national network built on one promise: college for all.

IDEA Public Schools was founded in 2000 in Texas's Rio Grande Valley as a single school of 150 students — built on the conviction that every child, regardless of zip code or circumstance, can succeed in college and in life. Twenty-five years later, IDEA is one of the largest and highest-performing public charter networks in the country, serving roughly **87,000 students across more than 140 tuition-free schools** in Texas, Ohio, and Florida.

The promise is not aspirational language. **Every IDEA graduating class — for more than fifteen consecutive years — has earned nearly 100% college acceptance.** In 2025, U.S. News & World Report ranked 25 IDEA high schools among the top 8% of nearly 25,000 high schools nationally, with seven in the top 1%.

2000

FOUNDED, RIO
GRANDE VALLEY

140+

TUITION-FREE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

~87K

STUDENTS ACROSS
FOUR STATES

100%

COLLEGE ACCEPTANCE

What the network means for this role. The IDEA Greater Cincinnati ED leads with regional ownership and national leverage: a proven K–12 academic model, IPS national functions in finance, HR, talent, and compliance, and a seat on the IPS leadership team alongside peer regional leaders. The ED is never building alone — but the region's results belong to the ED.





THE REGION • ABOUT IDEA GREATER CINCINNATI

Young, growing, and built for the west side.

Launched in 2022, IDEA Greater Cincinnati operates two campuses on Cincinnati's west side — **IDEA Price Hill** and **IDEA Valley View** — each home to an Academy (elementary) and a College Preparatory (secondary) program. The region follows IDEA's proven growth model: campuses add grade levels each year as founding students advance, building toward full K-12 enrollment and the region's first graduating classes.

Today the region serves approximately 1,100 students. It is governed by the IDEA Greater Cincinnati Board of Directors, authorized under Ohio's community school framework, and supported by a philanthropic community that has consistently invested in IDEA's presence in Cincinnati.

2022

REGION
LAUNCHED

2

CAMPUSES, FOUR
SCHOOL PROGRAMS

~1,100

STUDENTS
TODAY

1,800+

STUDENTS AT
SUSTAINABILITY

A REGION AT ITS PROOF POINT

The startup chapter is over; the proving chapter is beginning. The next ED inherits real momentum — two operating campuses, a committed board, national backing — and the responsibility to convert it into full enrollment, top-tier results, and financial sustainability. Few roles in education offer this much room to build with this much behind you.



About Cincinnati

A river city with big-league culture and Midwestern warmth

Cincinnati, Ohio is a dynamic, historically rich city of approximately **310,000 residents**, anchored within a Greater Cincinnati metropolitan area of more than 2.3 million people. Situated at the confluence of the Ohio River and the states of Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana, it offers the cultural and professional depth of a major city with the livability and accessibility of a midwestern community.

310K

CITY
RESIDENTS

2.3M

METRO
POPULATION

\$161B

REGIONAL
GDP, 2024

20,000+

NEW RESIDENTS
IN 2024

The city's economic foundation is diverse and resilient. Cincinnati is home to a remarkable concentration of Fortune 500 companies — including Procter & Gamble, Kroger, and Fifth Third Bank — alongside a thriving healthcare and bioscience sector anchored by Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, one of the top-ranked children's hospitals in the nation, and the University of Cincinnati Health system. The region's GDP reached \$161 billion in 2024, and the area added more than 20,000 new residents that year — its strongest population growth of the decade.

Cincinnati is a city of vibrant neighborhoods, a nationally recognized food and arts scene, and deep civic pride. Its cultural landscape includes the Cincinnati Art Museum, the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, and a thriving Over-the-Rhine district that has become one of the country's most notable urban revitalization stories — with major league sports (the Bengals and Reds), the University of Cincinnati and Xavier University, and extensive parks and green spaces along the river.

An urgent need — and a genuine opportunity.

For education leaders, Cincinnati presents both an urgent need and a real chance to shape the city's education landscape.

Approximately **20% of Cincinnati families live in poverty**, and the city's west side communities — where IDEA's two campuses are located — have historically had limited access to high-quality school options. The charter sector in Cincinnati has a growing presence and a supportive philanthropic community that has consistently invested in the IDEA region.

The next Executive Director will have the chance to become a recognized voice and leader in Cincinnati's education landscape at a moment when that landscape is actively being shaped — building schools that give every child on the west side access to a world-class education.



Core Responsibilities

01

STRATEGY

Strategic Leadership & Regional Vision

The ED sets the strategic direction for Cincinnati within the broader IPS organizational framework. This means translating IPS national priorities into regional execution and ensuring that regional strategy and execution is aligned with and contributes to IPS's overall direction.

- ◆ Develop and lead a regional strategy that reflects both the needs of the Cincinnati community and alignment with IPS's organizational priorities and mission.
- ◆ Translate multi-year goals into annual operating plans with clear owners, timelines, and measurable benchmarks.
- ◆ Cultivate decision-making via thoughtful analysis of the current state and available resources and levers, with attention to shepherding communication and investing stakeholders before, during, and after decisions are made.
- ◆ Actively participate in IPS leadership team conversations; bring Cincinnati's perspective, flag tensions between priorities and realities that may exist both nationally and regionally, and help shape direction across the organization.
- ◆ Partner with IPS national functions — finance, HR, compliance — and shared services partners such as IT to efficiently leverage shared resources and expertise and build regional accountability for outcomes.

02

GROWTH

Enrollment Growth & Financial Sustainability

Growing from ~1,100 to 1,800 students is not a background priority — it is the central operational challenge of this role. The ED owns the enrollment trajectory for the region.

- ◆ Set and relentlessly pursue annual student enrollment and persistence targets.
- ◆ Build and maintain a strong community presence and school brand that drives student recruitment and family retention.
- ◆ Ensure the VP of Operations owns enrollment systems and effective execution, while the ED provides strategic direction.
- ◆ Understand the charter school funding model; manage to budget, flag financial risks early, and partner effectively with the IPS finance team.
- ◆ Lead annual budget development including the full regional P&L narrative.

03

ACADEMICS

Academic Excellence & Student Outcomes

The ED is accountable for what happens in every classroom in IDEA Greater Cincinnati via setting high expectations, building the right team, and fostering continuous improvement.

- ◆ Build an inquisitive culture of data informed decision making and setting the expectation that teachers, leaders and students understand and act on data.
- ◆ Ensure the development of instructional leaders; provide coaching, feedback, and clear accountability for school performance.
- ◆ Understand Ohio's accountability systems (ODEW star ratings, authorizer requirements) and ensure the region meets or exceeds all benchmarks.
- ◆ Champion a culture of high expectations for students — particularly students who have historically been underserved.

04

PEOPLE

Talent Development & Team Leadership

The ED's job is to build a capacitated team that can run the region. The quality of the regional leadership team is the most important long-term lever the ED controls.

- ◆ Recruit, develop, and retain a high-performing regional leadership team across operations, academics, talent, student support, and compliance.
- ◆ Delegate with clarity and hold direct reports accountable for results — not processes.
- ◆ Conduct structured, developmental 1:1s with each direct report; treat leadership development as an ongoing priority.
- ◆ Create a culture where candor, feedback, and growth are expected norms — modeled from the top.
- ◆ Identify and intentionally grow internal candidates for key leadership roles, including succession to the ED role itself.

05

GOVERNANCE

Governance, Compliance & External Relations

The ED is the primary face of IDEA Cincinnati to the board, authorizer, community, and philanthropic community and actively cultivates relationships with each.

- ◆ Serve as the primary staff liaison to the IDEA Greater Cincinnati Board of Directors; foster board engagement in appropriately governing and setting strategic direction, while management oversees daily operations and executes strategy.
- ◆ Steward the authorizer relationship; maintain full compliance with all state and federal requirements and approach ODEW and authorizer interactions with transparency and professionalism. Secure and sustain charter renewal and renewal of the authorizer contract.
- ◆ Build and sustain relationships with local elected officials, community leaders, funders, and partners that support the region's enrollment growth and long-term stability.
- ◆ Serve as IDEA Greater Cincinnati's public voice; be present and visible in the communities the region serves.

06

CULTURE

Organizational Culture & Staff Experience

The ED sets the cultural tone for the region based on the understanding that a strong adult culture is fundamental to transformative student outcomes.

- ◆ Model the values and behaviors you expect of the team: transparency, accountability, care for people, and relentless focus on mission.
- ◆ Ensure staff feel valued, supported, and set up for success — particularly teachers and campus staff who are closest to students.
- ◆ Address concerns related to organizational health directly and early so that culture is prioritized in times of operational urgency.

THE MANDATE

What success looks like.

The board and IPS leadership will know this hire worked — and so will the ED — by markers like these:

FIRST 100 DAYS

- ◆ Deep in classrooms and the community — known by name at both campuses.
- ◆ Trusted working relationships established with the board, the authorizer, and the IPS national team.
- ◆ Honest assessment of the regional leadership team complete, with gaps named.
- ◆ Personal ownership of the next fall's enrollment number — visibly and unambiguously.

BY THE END OF YEAR ONE

- ◆ Fall enrollment target met; persistence holding or improving.
- ◆ Regional leadership team complete and operating with clear ownership.
- ◆ Academic acceleration plan in motion, with a credible trajectory toward 4.5 stars.
- ◆ A visible public presence in west side Cincinnati and the city's education conversation.

BY YEARS THREE-FOUR

- ◆ 1,800+ students enrolled; the region financially sustainable.
- ◆ Star ratings on track for 4.5 by 2030, protecting Quality School Funding eligibility.
- ◆ A leadership bench with credible successors for every key seat — including the ED's.
- ◆ IDEA recognized as a leading voice for educational excellence in Cincinnati.



Who we're looking for: an owner, not an operator.

Successful candidates may come from charter networks, school districts, or other high-accountability sectors — what matters is the evidence. The strongest candidates will bring:

- ◆ **Executive-level leadership experience** — typically 7+ years of progressive leadership, including multi-school, regional, or organization-wide scope (e.g., Executive Director, Superintendent, Head of Schools, regional/area superintendent, or equivalent).
- ◆ **A record of growing something measurable** — enrollment, schools, programs, or revenue. This is a growth role; maintaining an institution is not the same skill as building one.
- ◆ **Results owning an enrollment-driven budget or P&L** — fluency with charter funding models strongly preferred; the ability to own a budget narrative, not just read one, required.
- ◆ **A track record of driving academic outcomes through leaders** — setting a high bar, using data relentlessly, and coaching school leaders to results without micromanaging instruction.
- ◆ **Experience leading leaders** — building, developing, and holding accountable a senior team across functions.
- ◆ **Credibility with boards and external stakeholders** — boards, authorizers or regulators, funders, elected officials, and community leaders.
- ◆ **Bachelor's degree required; advanced degree preferred.** Ohio experience is a plus, not a prerequisite — but full-time presence in, and commitment to, Cincinnati is non-negotiable.

THIS IS YOUR ROLE IF...

- ◆ You want to own outcomes end-to-end — and be measured on them.
- ◆ Enrollment, academics, and budget feel like one job to you, not three.
- ◆ You're energized by being the public face of a mission in a community.
- ◆ You see a national network as leverage — and know how to use it.

IT PROBABLY ISN'T IF...

- ◆ You'd prefer to inherit a stabilized institution and steward it.
- ◆ You view enrollment as the operations team's problem.
- ◆ You're most comfortable when decisions are pre-approved above you.
- ◆ You experience network alignment as constraint rather than support.

COMPENSATION & HOW TO APPLY

The work ahead starts with a conversation.

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

Salaries for people entering this role typically fall between \$161,694 and \$198,884, commensurate with relevant experience and qualifications and in alignment with internal equity. The position is eligible for performance pay based on organizational performance and goal attainment.

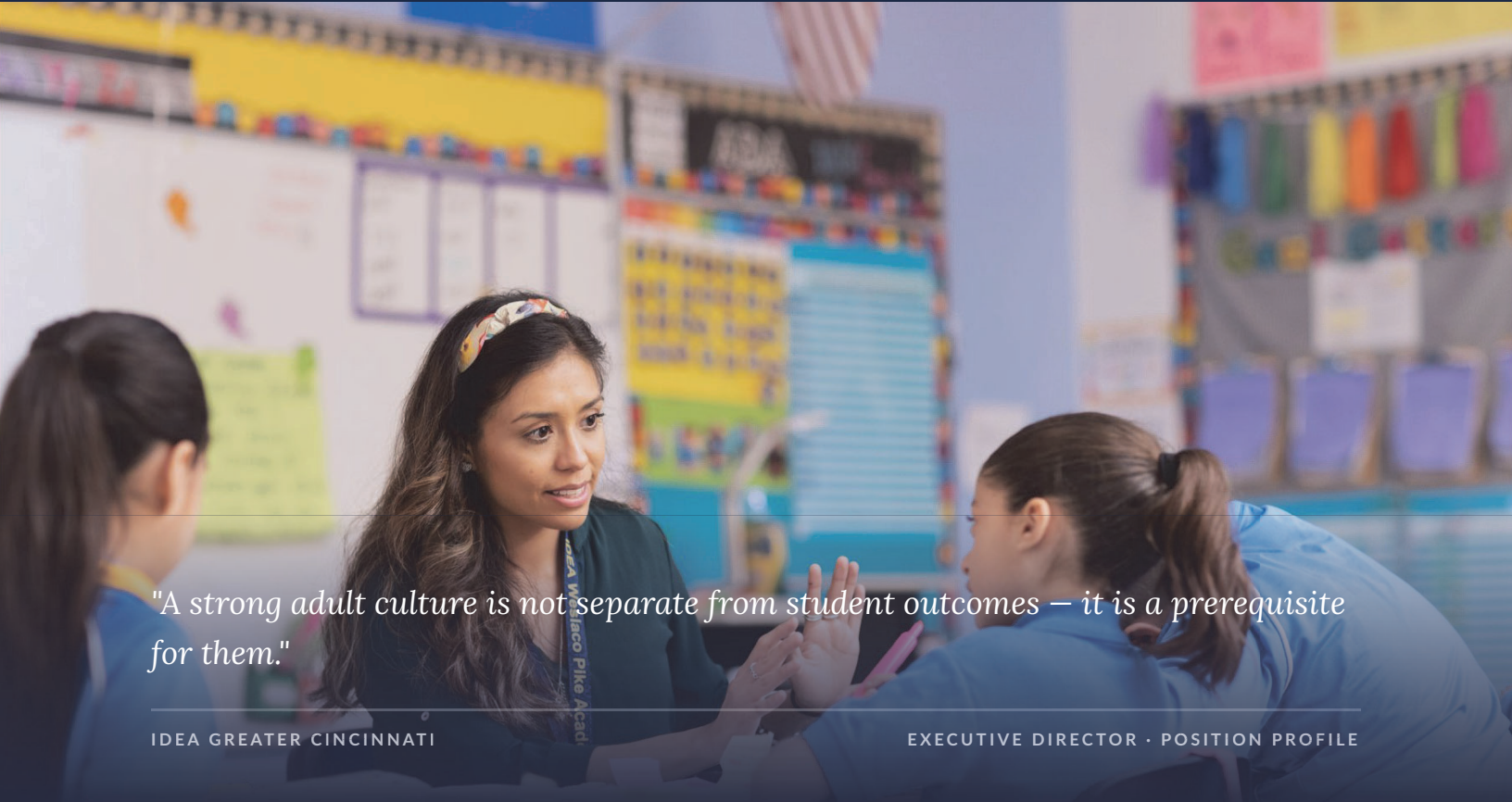
Additionally, we offer medical, dental, and vision plans, disability, life insurance, flexible spending account options, generous vacation time, referral bonuses, professional development, and a 403(b) plan. For information on benefits, please visit: <https://ideapublicschools.org/careers/benefits/>

HOW TO APPLY

This is an immediate opening. Submit your application online through Jobvite. Please note that applications will be reviewed on an ongoing basis until the position is filled. Applicants are encouraged to apply as early as possible.

Additional Information:

- Additional duties as assigned.
- IDEA may offer a relocation stipend to defray the cost of moving for this role, if applicable.
- Learn more about our Commitment to Core Values here: <https://ideapublicschools.org/our-story/#core-values>



"A strong adult culture is not separate from student outcomes — it is a prerequisite for them."