



Chief Executive Officer Search

Position Guide · February 2025

Search for
Chief Executive Officer
Positive Education Program

2	ABOUT POSITIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM
6	THE OPPORTUNITY
9	POSITION SUMMARY
11	CANDIDATE PROFILE
14	COMPENSATION, BENEFITS & APPLICATION FOR POSITION

ABOUT POSITIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

Position Chief Executive Officer

Reports to Board of Directors

Location Cleveland, OH



OUR MISSION

Supporting young people to overcome and thrive.

OUR VISION

An equitable community where every young person is valued and experiences joy and deep fulfillment.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

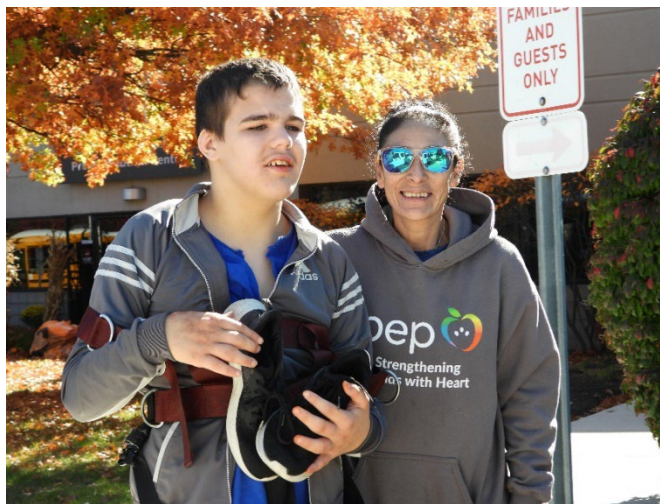
Anchored in the time-tested philosophy of *Re-EDucation*, PEP's family-centered programming is designed to identify and build upon the existing strengths of children – all within therapeutic and supportive environments.

ABOUT POSITIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

As one of Ohio's largest non-profit agencies committed to children, Positive Education Program (PEP) provides services, both direct and consultative, for children challenged by complex developmental trauma, mental health issues and autism, their families and the professionals who support them. PEP is committed to understanding and overcoming the significant trauma and chronic stress experienced by many of the youth we serve. Anchored in the time-tested philosophy of Re-EDucation, PEP's family-centered programming is designed to identify and build upon the existing strengths of children, all within therapeutic and supportive environments rooted in trauma-informed practice and the science of brain development. The agency is also a Phase II certified Neurosequential Model of Therapeutics (NMT) site through the [Neurosequential Network™](#).

PEP's programmatic offerings include:

- **PEP Day Treatment Centers (DTCs):** PEP's five DTCs include Chesnutt, Hopewell, Phoenix, Prentiss Autism Center and Willow Creek. Each location is led by teams of educators and mental health professionals who weave hands-on academics, therapeutic interventions and social-emotional skill development into cohesive growth plans for every child and young person. DTCs serve grades K-12, ages 5-22. Funding comes through tuition payments from referring school districts and Medicaid for billable mental health services.
- **PEP Connections:** Serves as a Care Management Entity (CME) for OhioRISE. This program provides intensive and moderate care coordination for multi-system involved youth in the region known as Catchment Q, which includes most of Cleveland and its inner-ring eastside suburbs. In addition, PEP delivers Intensive Home-Based Treatment (IHBT). Revenue for both services is connected to a recently developed program of the Ohio Department of Medicaid, OhioRISE, which is administered through Aetna Better Health of Ohio.
- **PEP Prentiss Autism Center:** Through a strength-based model of instruction and consultation, PEP helps young people with autism discover new ways of relating and communicating with the world around them. PEP has worked extensively with children with autism and their families since the mid-1980s, long before it became a high-profile diagnosis. PEP Prentiss' programming is designed around the specific needs and hopes of each child and family. Funding comes through tuition payments from referring school districts.



- **PEP Early Childhood Plus:** PEP’s collection of early childhood services touches nearly 1,000 children (birth through age 6) each year through consultation, training and support for parents, teachers and caregivers. Over the years, PEP developed a nationally recognized expertise promoting strategies for healthy social-emotional development during a child’s earliest years. Funding for these services comes from Invest in Children through Starting Point, ADAMHS of Cuyahoga County and Ohio Mental Health and Addiction Services through ADAMHS CC.
- **PEP Assist:** The program’s consultants partner with educators and other professionals who work with children to assess their unique situations and develop actionable plans for success, whether for an individual student, classroom, entire school district or child-serving organization. Trainings for peer professionals are offered throughout the year, as well. Contracts are typically with school districts.



PEP provides a critical layer of support that allows parents and other caregivers to remain engaged in the workforce, at home and in the community. Most importantly, PEP helps children shift toward a positive developmental trajectory. 94% of parents of children enrolled in PEP Day Treatment Centers report their days are no longer interrupted by requests to remove their children from school. 99% of parents of PEP Connections clients report that they feel they're treated as a full partner in the process of planning for their child and family. 100% of childcare provider respondents said PEP Early Childhood Plus consultants were responsive to their expressed needs. 93% of students supported by PEP Assist were maintained in their original setting or moved to a less restrictive setting.

The CEO has oversight of approximately 390 full-time employees (with seven direct reports) and an annual budget of approximately \$37 million, and reports to the Board of Directors with 25 members.



The next CEO of Positive Education Program will have the unique opportunity to lead and grow this respected, multi-program organization forward into even greater levels of service, visibility and impact.



This leader will be a champion for Northeast Ohio's most vulnerable young people. The CEO will serve as the face and ambassador of the organization and will also provide clear vision, inspiration and increased visibility to elevate child well-being with both organizational stakeholders and the Greater Cleveland community. Heightened external awareness of PEP's services and reach will further expand opportunities to serve and to support the most vulnerable children, youth and families of Ohio.

This role is an exceptional opportunity for the right candidate to employ all of their skills in leadership, management, partnership, fundraising/revenue generation, advocacy and visionary thinking for a strong organization composed of a highly talented and committed leadership team, dedicated staff and volunteer Board. This individual should serve in the capacity of enterprise president: joining hands with the senior leadership team and Board of Directors to set the tone and agenda and capitalize on the strong reputation of the organization.

The key priorities for the CEO will be to maintain program quality while addressing the current industry challenges of human capital and workforce development; declining enrollment in the Day Treatment Centers (specifically within the non-specialized DTCs - PEP Chesnutt, PEP Hopewell and PEP Willow Creek); looking at revenue generation and innovation with a fresh perspective; and actualizing the strategic plan in concert with the Board. The CEO will build upon a workforce culture of engaging the best employees, open communication, collaboration, inclusivity and teamwork. PEP has been very intentional about their learning and journey in regard to racial diversity and belonging and the CEO will need to ensure that those values continue to be lived in the micro and macro level work.



The next CEO will provide vision and partnership with a committed Board of Directors to set an ambitious strategy and continue their tradition of standing in the gap by offering services that other providers don't. This will likely include an honest assessment of which programs best advance the mission of PEP both from a programmatic and a fiscal perspective. Equally important, the CEO will provide guidance and emotional intelligence as they work with the leadership team to implement strategies across multiple fronts including, but not limited to: defining the scope of resources within and the services offered by the organization while maintaining a mission-focused approach; deepening the values of diversity and inclusion across the enterprise; introducing a new lens through which PEP views revenue streams and programmatic focus; and consistently expanding the organization's impact.



Reporting to the Board of Directors, the CEO is responsible for working collaboratively with the Board of Directors, providing overall leadership of the organization and ensuring the implementation of PEP's strategic framework (mission, vision, values and strategic direction) across programmatic, financial and administrative operations of the agency.

The CEO will communicate effectively with the Board to assist with the establishment and implementation of the agency's goals, policies and financial structure. This leader will collaborate with and guide the senior team to continue implementing and operationalizing the strategic plan while ensuring that the budget, staff and priorities are aligned with the agency's mission. The CEO and the senior team are responsible for the continuous improvement of quality, profitability and growth by effectively responding to marketplace changes and opportunities in a timely way to ensure that the agency's business changes are implemented and realized to full potential.

The PEP CEO must be a visionary leader who partners with, helps to inspire and serves as the face of the organization to external state and local partners, school administrators, behavioral health colleagues, advocates, donors and the general public. The CEO acts as an ambassador within the public and private sectors to encourage a healthy community and to address the issues of PEP's constituencies. This leader interacts with clients, donors, legislators, elected officials and the community in order to raise awareness, improve services and generate community involvement. The CEO is responsible for the fiscal integrity of the agency, including the overall financial condition and annual budget and, as such, is the lead contact for funders at city, state and federal levels.

The next PEP CEO will effectively manage and administer this \$37 million organization, think strategically about how to balance mission and sustainability, raise resources in support of the mission and serve as a respected leader for creating pathways for the growth, achievement and lifelong success of Ohio families and children.

POSITION SUMMARY, *continued*

The CEO will provide executive management of trauma-responsive program delivery, resource development, external collaboration, finance and budgeting and governmental affairs. The CEO will internally build the team by filling key leadership roles as they arise, invest in and retain a diverse and inclusive team, and will have the opportunity to continue building a positive and dynamic culture in a challenging environment. They will employ strong business acumen and financial savvy and will work with clinical experts to build a behavioral healthcare and education support network in a changing landscape.



We seek a candidate who is a proven and effective leader and who is passionate about improving the quality of life for children, young people and families.

This entrepreneurial individual demonstrates leadership characterized by a visionary outlook; has the ability to garner broad internal and external support and consensus; knows how to increase the visibility and philanthropic resources for the organization; can point to success creating strong, effective and collaborative teams; has sound business, financial and management acumen; and the fortitude to carry forward major new projects and initiatives.

Visionary Leadership. The candidate can articulate a compelling vision and keep people focused during challenging times as well as invite new partners into the mission.

Strong External Relations & Communications Skills. The candidate relishes and has proven success in elevating awareness of their organization. The candidate must possess the highest level of oral, written and interpersonal communication skills to effectively work with a broad range of individuals and organizations including board members, donors, professional colleagues, public officials and community partners, as well as the media. Also key to this role is a track record of supporting and enhancing the philanthropic efforts of their organization.

Ability to Nurture Positive Internal Culture & Develop People. The candidate will have experience in effective organizational leadership and the ability to build and nurture a culture that is grounded in a shared vision, vibrant in teamwork, supported by mutual respect and unrelenting in its pursuit of quality. Innovation and continuous improvement among staff in a complex organization is critical. A proven track record of successful strategies to identify, recruit and retain talent is essential.

Focus on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging. The candidate has demonstrated success sustaining a leadership culture that champions diversity and embodies collaboration, inclusivity and belonging for all people. This encompasses professional development, child-family engagement and the recruitment and retention of the highest quality staff who can most effectively meet the challenges and needs of PEP youth.

Business and Financial Acumen. The candidate will possess strong management acumen utilizing sound business principles. The candidate understands organizational management of similarly sized, large organizations and is knowledgeable about current and possible future policies, practices and trends affecting the sectors of healthcare and education. Given the revenue streams at the organization, the candidate will have a proven track record of successful financial management as well as driving growth through the negotiation of large, complex agreements and innovative, strategic initiatives.

Strategic Planning Skills. With a strong focus on strategic planning as well as emotional intelligence, the candidate will demonstrate leadership in defining a compelling and inspired vision and mobilizing the organization in its achievement. The ability to lead employees in multiple locations as an effective team of closely coordinated, highly professional, accountable staff members is a must.



Program Expertise. Proven leadership skills/abilities and successful administrative/management experience in K-12 education and/or child and adolescent mental health are highly sought for this role. The candidate will exhibit an understanding of the local and national environment and provide thought leadership as to how PEP can capitalize on the ongoing changes for the benefit of both the organization's financial success and the needs of its clients.

Ability to Build Trust. This leader will embody a sense of calling to the mission, as well as servant leadership and high regard for the legacy and history of PEP. As a good listener, they will lead through influence, an entrepreneurial mindset, innovation and always adhere to an appropriate and effective set of core values and beliefs in decision-making. The candidate will have integrity and strength of character, will lead with the highest ethical standards, is collaborative but directive, is comfortable at the intersection of margin and mission and is open, accessible, authentic and empathetic.

Minimum Qualifications. A bachelor's degree from a four-year accredited college or university is required; an advanced degree in management, educational administration, special education, public health or the clinical sciences or equivalent years of work experience are highly preferred. The candidate must have a minimum of ten years of senior managerial experience leading a large, complex organization. Knowledge of and experience dealing with large school districts and/or large, complex and highly matrixed organizations is highly valued. Affiliation with and leadership in local, state or national professional associations and continuing education and professional development is a plus.



PEP offers a competitive salary and benefits package.

The salary range for this position is between \$225,000 and \$250,000 and will be commensurate with experience. PEP offers a benefits package, including but not limited to paid holidays, paid time off, group health, vision and dental, and generous retirement benefits.

Equal Employment Opportunity

PEP is committed to providing equal employment opportunity for all qualified employees and applicants. It is our policy to comply with all applicable laws prohibiting discrimination in employment, including but not limited to those that prohibit discrimination regardless of race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, disability, age, creed, ancestry, pregnancy, military status, sexual orientation or genetic information. All those employed with PEP must be at least 18 years of age.

How to apply

To apply, please submit a current resume and letter of introduction to Kittleman & Associates, LLC ([click here to apply](#)). For best consideration, please submit your application by April 7, 2025.

For more information about PEP, please visit: <https://www.pepcleve.org>.