

**Board Report**

File #: 2022-0178, **File Type:** Motion / Motion Response

Agenda Number: 30.

REVISED
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
MARCH 24, 2022

Motion by:

DIRECTORS GARCETTI, SOLIS, MITCHELL, DUTRA, AND Hahn

Hiring Individuals with English as a Second Language Motion

In Los Angeles County, more than half of the population speaks a language other than English at home, with Spanish being the overwhelming majority of this group. According to Census Bureau data, the top five languages spoken at home in LA County other than English are Spanish, Chinese, Tagalog, Armenian, and Korean.

At all levels of its organization, Metro should represent these communities. However, existing protocol requires applicants to read, write, and understand English before applying, creating a barrier to entry for individuals who are otherwise fully qualified but may not feel confident in their language skills.

The *Bienvenidos a Metro* program aims to offer flexibility with this language requirement to expand employment opportunities beyond the current applicant pool to fight the current Bus and Rail Operator shortage. Such an innovative program could open Metro to a larger hiring pool and assist Operator training through language acquisition services.

Modifying this requirement and creating an English as a Second Language (ESL) program not only supports Metro's hiring efforts but also reinforces the equity and inclusion work currently underway. By working collectively and collaboratively, Metro will create economic opportunities for individuals seeking employment and developing their language skills.

Partnerships with external stakeholders like community colleges, community-based organizations, and local job source centers will ensure that this monumental change will be effectively communicated to potential applicants. To disseminate this information, Metro can take this opportunity to establish a communications partnering strategy and utilize channels already well-connected in the community.

SUBJECT: HIRING INDIVIDUALS WITH ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE MOTION

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE Motion by Directors Garcetti, Solis, Mitchell, Dutra, and Hahn that the Board direct the CEO to:

- A. Pursue partnerships with external ESL-serving stakeholders and organizations in Spanish-speaking communities to amplify Metro's efforts to recruit individuals with Spanish as their first language;
- B. Coordinate with Los Angeles County's Internal Services Department through its Multiethnic & Local/Community Media Directory to promote hiring opportunities in non-English speaking media and explore opportunities for partnerships with County agencies such as the Department of Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services (WDACS) and the Office of Immigrant Affairs;
- C. Report back to Board providing updates on partnerships and cost analysis by June 2022; and
- D. Conduct a feasibility study within the first 12 months of program launch on expanding *Bienvenidos a Metro* to additional languages to reach the widest Operator applicant pool.