

BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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City Council Bill 22-0137R **Informational Hearing – Hiring Initiatives – Spanish Speakers**

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Baltimore City Public Schools (City Schools) has reviewed City Council Resolution 22-0137R, which invites agency representatives, including the Baltimore City Public School System, to discuss the hiring of Spanish speakers for employment in City government.

As the Resolution highlights, the 2020 Census noted a 76% increase in the Hispanic and Latino population of Baltimore City, rising from 25,960 residents in 2010 to 45,927 residents at the time of the survey. This dramatic increase in Hispanic and Latino residents is indicative of a population that is no longer limited to Broadway, Eastern Avenue, and Highlandtown, but rather integrated and integral throughout the many neighborhoods and communities of Baltimore City. City Schools appreciates the significance of these figures and would note that in examining our own data, from school year 2016-17 to school year 2021-22, City Schools' enrollment of English Learners whose primary home language is Spanish more than doubled (from 3,418 to 7,677).

City Schools recognizes the importance of recruiting Spanish speakers for employment throughout the system. At present, the district pursues the following bilingual staff recruitment efforts:

- City Schools has a [Multilingual Learner and Community Strategic Plan](#); bilingual staff recruitment is a specific goal in this plan.
- Recruitment efforts in Puerto Rico (including newspaper advertisements) and at Hispanic-serving institutions to target Spanish-speaking teachers and staff for district office positions.
- Leveraging (social media and) recruitment platforms, such as LinkedIn and Handshake, to target Spanish-speaking candidates for teacher and other district office positions.
- Surveyed existing City Schools' staff to gather data about language-speaking abilities to better ascertain the distribution of bilingual employees, and as a way to recruit employees to schools with significant multilingual enrollment or into ESOL positions.

In addition, the district's emerging bilingual staff recruitment efforts are as follows:

- Expand the number of bilingual job applications that we post, to include key positions such as Secretary, Social Worker and Guidance Counselor, for schools with significant multilingual enrollment.
- In collaboration with the ESOL Department, additional recruitment efforts/partnerships with local colleges and universities for bilingual candidates.
- Connect with the local community/hold events in the community to foster engagement with City Schools and provide opportunity to learn about employment opportunities.
- Promote bilingual staff opportunities to parents and community members with the fastest growing Hispanic student populations.
- Collect staffing referrals from newly-hired bilingual staff members.

City Schools stands ready to work with Baltimore City government in seeking to increase the number of Spanish speaking employees in public-facing roles, including an examination of relevant hiring processes aimed at recruiting and retaining Spanish speaking employees. We look forward to participating in further discussions.