



english for NEW
BOSTONIANS

ENGLISH WORKS BUSINESS COUNCIL



WHAT IS THE ENGLISH WORKS BUSINESS COUNCIL?

Established in 2020, the English Works Business Council is an English for New Bostonians (ENB) business partnership program that convenes leaders, facilitates collaboration, and shares best practices to meet the needs of our fast-growing immigrant workforce in Greater Boston.

As an essential part of our economy and communities, immigrants make up 20% of the Massachusetts workforce and own 29% of Boston's "main street" businesses. ENB is a leader in working with immigrant communities to advance the quality and availability of English language training. ENB has unique resources and a track record of helping business leaders create ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) opportunities for their workers.

2022 Council Members:



On Wednesday, January 26, 2022, we convened executives from three branches of government – Economic Development, Workforce Development, and Education to discuss new funding opportunities and investment ideas to advance companies and immigrant workers across our region – in particular, the untapped workforce of highly motivated limited English speakers.

If you would like to replay the meeting, or if you were unable to attend, please click [here](#). The Speaker bios and resources are [here](#).

EVENT SUMMARY:

Dan Rivera, President and CEO of MassDevelopment, shared [opportunities for businesses](#) and underscored how rapidly the job market, and jobs themselves, are changing. Yet, *"the only thing that has not changed in the last 30-40 years is the way we pay people – we are lagging in paying a living wage."*

Christine Abrams, President and CEO of Commonwealth Corporation, highlighted the unprecedented availability of federal stimulus funds: *"What we have is funding. Now the issue is not resources, but scale."* She encouraged employers to apply to the state's [Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund](#) and the [Workforce Training Fund Program](#). *"Join with others to come in for more money over a longer period, with others doing similar things."*

Attendee **Nader Acevedo**, Executive Vice President of the Hispanic American Institute, noted that many Hispanic businesses had missed out on loan and assistance opportunities through the pandemic: *"Businesses need to be ready, find the right resources, find coalitions to build teams. That's the way to do it – you don't do it alone."*

JOB QUALITY

Wyvonne Stevens-Carter, Director of Adult Education at MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, flagged available [workplace education funding](#) and raised the great importance of job quality. *“The difference employers can make is an environment where people are seen and heard and appreciated.” People want to bring their talent, she emphasized, but employees need flexibility as well as good pay.*

CHILD CARE IS THE BACKBONE OF ALL OTHER SECTORS

To keep talent, Christine Abrams stressed, we need to rethink and reinvest in the childcare sector. *“Look at who is there. Largely underpaid, 80-85% women and women of color. There’s no reason that such important work should not be valued.”* People leave jobs because they cannot find quality child care, Abrams noted. Perhaps employers can join to create a pilot program that offers childcare – this is the type of innovation that will help us all.

The spirit of the English Works Business Council convening was summed up by ENB Board President **Michel Bamani**: *“Think of yourself as a competitive advantage,”* he advised jobseekers and employees. And, to businesses, Bamani suggested, *“Think of employees as your best asset.”*

“There are a lot of resources on the table – keep in touch with these panelists, keep in touch with English for New Bostonians. Now is the time to bring training into your company so incumbent workers can get what they need to move up and continue growing in your own company: shared investment, mutual opportunity.” **Claudia Green**, ENB Executive Director.

WATCH OUR LAST MEETING



OUR NEXT EWBC MEETING IS WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13, 2022 AT 11:00AM