**April 22, 2021**

**Request**

*The Indianapolis New Skills ready network project team is looking for information regarding a statewide qualifications framework for modern youth apprenticeship, including reviewing progress on prior learning assessments (PLA) or awarding credit for prior learning (CPL) for work completed on the job.*

**Barriers**

* Lack of awareness around process and terminology for both learners and practitioners leads to a lack of support for CPL
* Lack of transparency around PLA policies contributes to a lack of participation in programs that utilize PLAs for credit
* Concerns about rigor of the prior learning
* Inadequate training at the postsecondary level to support CPL
* Limited or no institutional (or faculty-level) incentives to support CPL
* Cost of assessing prior learning to institutions and to students creates barriers for expansion of PLA/CPL policies

**Proposed strategies**

* Build a knowledge base at each institution about what credit for prior learning is, how it connects to work-based learning or pre-apprenticeship opportunities, and how learners can take advantage of it
* Articulate the value of CPL for both learners and higher education institutions
* Compensate faculty for reviewing portfolios or other PLAs to award credit
* Arrange tours of training or educational facilities to showcase the rigor of the prior learning
* Make campus policies around CPL clear and transparent to both staff and learners
* Consider allowing PLA costs to be covered by financial aid or WIOA dollars to eliminate cost barriers
* Review existing PLA policies for issues related to equity, including ensuring policy language is inclusive and implementation does not create unintended inequities
* Higher education institutions should develop career pathways or programs of study in conjunction with partnered secondary or other postsecondary institutions with CPL in mind
* Develop a framework through which quality and rigor of work-based learning programs and industry-recognized credentials can be quantified for use in CPL policies

**Credit for Prior Learning for Work-Based Learning**

**Advance CTE**

This report, developed in 2019 with support from the Joyce Foundation, outlines the value of CPL, different policy levers, and the roles of different stakeholders in supporting CPL policy. Specific sections highlight crosswalking registered apprenticeship with academic credit and aligning industry-recognized credentials with academic credit. Examples from Louisiana, Minnesota, Kansas and Virginia are integrated throughout to illustrate specific highlights of statewide programs and policies that can be leveraged.

[Developing Credit for Prior Learning Policies](https://cte.careertech.org/sites/default/files/files/resources/Advance_CTE_Credit_for_Prior_Learning_April2019_0.pdf)

**Association of Community College Trustees**

This resource details the value of CPL specifically for workforce development, especially for prior work and competency-based educational experiences. The resource features local programs at Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College and Dallas County Community College District that implement PLA for this population.

[Make It Count: Recognizing Prior Learning for Workforce Development](https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED605122.pdf)

**NASPA: Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education**

This research brief investigates the role of advising for ensuring prior learning assessments can be utilized to secure credit and helping students navigate the PLA process. Highlights include how advisors can provide navigational help to learners, how institutions should prioritize information sharing, inclusive implementation methods, and examples of technology-enabled personalized advising.

[Advising and Prior Learning Assessment for Degree Completion](https://www.wiche.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/naspa-brief-082620-1.pdf)

**Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education**

This report communicates the value of CPL in the wake of COVID-19, especially in assisting displaced workers and learners work toward degrees. Recommendations include ensuring credit for prior learning is included in workforce training initiatives and expanding institutional partnerships to support CPL agreements. This research provides strong data about the value of CPL, especially for racially minoritized groups or special populations.

[Recognizing Prior Learning in the COVID-19 Era: Helping Displaced Workers and Students One Credit at a Time](https://www.wiche.edu/key-initiatives/recognition-of-learning/pla-covid-19/)

**Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education/Center for Law and Social Policy**

This resource details policies and practices related to the recognition of prior learning, particularly through Prior Learning Assessments. This report details summaries of state policies, barriers to implementation, and key recommendations for states and institutions.

<https://www.wiche.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/The-Current-State-of-PLA-Policies.pdf>

*State and Local Exemplars*

**Colorado**

Colorado has state statutes surrounding the use of pre-apprenticeship or internship work for postsecondary credits and concurrent enrollment. They also feature recommendations to expand and enhance these programs at a local level. <https://www.cde.state.co.us/postsecondary/1275recs_dec2015>

**Louisiana**

Louisiana’s Community and Technical College System (LCTCS) has established a system-wide [credit for prior learning equivalency policy](https://campussuite-storage.s3.amazonaws.com/prod/1558543/91b64910-2d2e-11e8-8c09-0a7155647e8a/2234031/38331df0-7b96-11eb-8eb8-0a927e2b74df/file/1.023%20Credit%20for%20Prior%20Learning%20%20%28Revised%2012.9.20%29.pdf). When combined with the state’s [Jump Start](https://www.louisianabelieves.com/courses/all-things-jump-start) program, secondary learners can work toward youth apprenticeships, industry-recognized credentials, and work-based learning experiences that will align with LCTCS coursework. Over 100 credentials have been crosswalked with college coursework and academic credit.

**Rhode Island**

Rhode Island grants credit for prior learning for apprenticeship programs or on-the-job learning, depending on the sponsor and associated coursework, including principles for CTE secondary students. <https://dlt.ri.gov/documents/pdf/apprenticeship/31Credit%20for%20Prior%20Learning.pdf>

**Tennessee**

As part of their [Tennessee Reconnect](https://tnreconnect.gov/) program, Tennessee has a statewide program called TimewiseTN that rewards learners for their prior learning at most Tennessee colleges and universities.

<https://tnreconnect.gov/Choose-a-Degree-College-Path/Prior-Learning-Assessment-Information>

**Virginia**

**Tidewater Community College**

Tidewater Community College developed a Technical Studies program, allowing participants to earn an Associate of Applied Science in Technical Studies, gain credit for documented previous occupational training and transition to Old Dominion University. This program rewards those with documented technical skills and previous professional experience with college credit that is applied directly to the degree and is exemplary due to how catered this program is to learners with prior experience and their inclusion in the development of this program.

<https://news.tcc.edu/odu-technical-studies-agreement/>