



**Examination of Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)
As Strategy for Achieving Workforce Development
System Success**

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About the National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB):

NAWB represents approximately 550 Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) and their 12,000+ business members that coordinate and leverage workforce strategies with education and economic development stakeholders within their local communities, to ensure that state and local workforce development and job training programs meet the needs of employers.

These investments in workforce development create a comprehensive system to provide America with a highly skilled workforce that competes in the global economy.

NAWB is the only association that advocates for Workforce Development Boards. NAWB works closely with policy makers in Washington, DC to inform national strategy as it relates to WDBs and our partners in education, economic development, labor and business.

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CAEL is a national non-profit organization, headquartered in Chicago, that links learning and work. CAEL's workforce and economic development endeavors are grounded in the belief that economic prosperity and inclusive growth occurs when the full range of community members have opportunity and access to learning and meaningful employment; when employers can expand unencumbered by the availability of talent; and when the public education and workforce development systems are proactive and additive to the efforts of both.



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Based in Los Angeles, ECMC Foundation is a national foundation that makes investments in postsecondary programs and initiatives. It is one of several affiliates under the ECMC Group Enterprise based in Minneapolis, which together work to help students succeed. The Foundation's mission is to inspire and to facilitate improvements that affect educational outcomes—especially among underserved populations—through evidence-based innovation.



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Examination of Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) As Strategy for Achieving Workforce Development System Success

A. Purpose of Paper

The intent of this paper is to identify ways that Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) can be used by the workforce development system in new and creative ways that provide more efficient routes for adult students to acquire credentials that are valued in the labor market. Additionally, it is hoped that stronger connections between the American Job Centers and higher education can be built in order to increase college entry and college completion. This is especially important because in many regions, a primary economic development goal is to raise college attainment levels for the adult population.

The concept of PLA can be traced back to early craft guilds where the work of apprentices was inspected by master craftsmen to determine mastery of established standards for the craft. The PLA process was later adopted by vocational education and training programs and from the United Kingdom for the specific purpose of allowing employed and unemployed persons to gain formal recognition of their skills, knowledge and abilities. PLA use was then broadened to provide recognition for learning in multiple disciplines in colleges and universities. PLA efforts also accelerated in the U.S. in conjunction with the G.I. Bill with World War II veterans earning credit for military training as they entered colleges in large numbers at the end of the war.

While the PLA process within modern-day higher education is often cumbersome and not well publicized to students and prospective students, the timing for establishing new connections to the workforce development system seems particularly good, as work-based learning and apprenticeship structures are higher priority strategies in the system, and formal certifications of skills are often necessary to access jobs with higher skills. Many customers of the American Job Centers are in need of credentials that can be obtained while working in jobs that pay wages, thus making the PLA process a valuable mechanism for continuing to work while formal credentials are being obtained. This paper explores current PLA uses within higher education and current needs and practices in the workforce development system that are logical connection points with the PLA process. The paper also explores the value of PLA to multiple audiences, including students, job seekers, colleges, workforce system partners, and employers.

B. Defining PLA

PLA is a process that recognizes the knowledge that an individual has acquired outside of the traditional classroom setting. It awards college-level credit based on the learning and skills that have been achieved from previous work and life experience, including military and/or corporate training, volunteer/civic activities, and hobbies and personal study. The assessment process for PLA determination includes national examinations (such as AP, IB, CLEP, DSST, Excelsior College, UExcel exams, and others), credit recommendation services such as ACE, portfolio assessments, and pre-evaluated certificates and trainings. Many colleges have assessment processes in place to evaluate the quality of these activities and award college credit if the activities are judged as equal to or exceeding the quality of knowledge acquired in college-level courses. PLA may also be referred to as Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR), Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL), Accrediting Prior Experiential Learning (APEL), Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) or informally as Work Experience Credit or Credit for Life Experience. It is important to note that, in all cases, what is being assessed is learning or the acquisition of knowledge, not the work or learning experience itself. PLA should not be confused with Credit Transfer, which also involves an assessment but is normally assessing the quality of academic learning at another educational institution as it may apply to a field of study or to advanced standing.

PLA, according to the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL), encompasses well established, research validated methods for assessing non-collegiate learning for college credit. PLA allows learners to demonstrate a knowledge/skill in a particular field(s) or sector(s) and have that learning evaluated for college credit. If creatively implemented PLA can be an important tool for incentivizing students to begin or continue college programs by validated the quality of learning that occurred in the workplace or other settings.

Additional information related to this can be found in Attachment A, Frequently Asked Questions.

C. Current PLA Environment Within Higher Education

PLA and the related implementation is usually considered to be almost entirely within the domain of the postsecondary education system, with the PLA often taking several forms to serve specific communities (such as the U.S. Armed Forces) with assessment tools customized to the potential students in these communities. The implementation rules for the PLA are often specific to individual colleges, or even departments within a college, with formats that vary dependent upon the institution and its policies. CAEL and the American Council on Education (ACE) have done some exemplary work related to PLA which goes beyond utilization strictly within the walls of higher education to engage with

industries, employers, military experiences and to building bridges to the workforce system.

PLA has maintained a relatively low profile at most colleges and, it is fair to say, gets mixed reviews from faculty and administrators of many colleges. While more than half of colleges accept some form of prior learning credit, the practice remains controversial within many colleges because of skepticism that college-level learning can truly occur outside of the confines of a controlled educational environment that is grounded in development of ideas, sophisticated thinking, and experimentation that are hallmarks of the higher education experience, but not necessarily of the alternative environments for PLA credits. Similar concerns are expressed about dual-credit high school programs that are taught by certified high school teachers and about internet courses that have limited interactions among the students and with the teachers. A counter argument in favor of the PLA process is that combining real-world experiences with classroom rigor brings relevance to the learning, which is a foundational principle for internships, co-op programs and other employer-engaged programs.

A convergence of factors is serving to increase interest and acceptance of PLA on college campuses. The first is the increased pressure on colleges for student completion and on-time completion, with PLA offering a useful mechanism to accelerate credit attainment. Second is the changing demographics of college students, with a much higher percentage of adults with work experiences enrolled. The third is increased pressure from economic development and community coalitions to dramatically increase the adult college attainment rates, particularly in fields aligned with the needs of employers in the labor market areas. These factors converge with the needs and priorities of local workforce development systems in ways that make this a particularly good time to explore stronger connections between higher education and workforce development programs and services. Community colleges are particularly well suited for making these connections, as they usually have strong ties to employers in their labor market areas. In addition, we are seeing the rapid increase of “College Promise” initiatives that are making community college access affordable, particularly when paired with earnings from work-based learning.

D. Alignment of PLA With Workforce Development System Priorities

The converging interests and priorities of higher education and workforce development systems create a current environment where PLA offers a great opportunity for Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) and the public workforce system to better and more efficiently integrate work-based learning with classroom learning to better serve job seekers and employers. Moving PLA from the exclusive domain of higher education offers the public workforce system the ability to attract more adults to enter or re-enter college,

engage employers as partners in skills attainment and certification, and create new “learn and earn” models that provide needed income for adults as they progress along defined career pathways. If creatively implemented, PLA can be a primary tool for the workforce development system for achieving several goals in partnerships with their education and economic development partners:

1. Raising overall college attainment rates in their regions;
2. Increasing college persistence and on-time degree completion;
3. Increasing the number of affordable routes to college entry and completion; and
4. Directing the use of employer funds for training (such as tuition reimbursement programs) to degree programs that align directly to work-relevant skills certification.

With the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) emphasis on learning by working, the recognition of value that a job seeker possesses from on-the-job learning serve to incentivize and encourage the job seeker to pursue further credentials, with the job seeker now grounded in a clear position on a career pathway. The workforce system must increasingly encourage attainment of postsecondary credentials in a national labor market where projections point to 60% or more of jobs requiring postsecondary credentials by 2025. Often job seekers have obtained the skills and knowledge embedded within specific credentials but lack the actual credential itself due to the costs and time necessary to apply for and complete these programs. The movement toward shorter, stackable courses (micro-credentials) and “badges” offers even greater potential for aligning PLA with these highly-focused credentials.

As discussed, the overarching goal of this paper is to help Local WDBs and the American Job Centers to recognize the value of stronger connections to the PLA processes in their regions and to develop a plan for incorporating PLA in their tools to better serve job seekers, employers, and other community partners. PLA’s integration into the day-to-day services offered by local workforce development systems through the American Job Centers has been erratic at best.

Section 675.100 of the implementing regulations of the WIOA state eight purposes of the law. The chart that follows shows each of these stated purposes along with related PLA support.

WIOA Purpose	PLA Support
Increasing access to, and opportunities for individuals to receive, the employment, education, training, and support services necessary to succeed in the labor market . . .	PLA increases access and efficiency for job seekers to identify the academic value of their work and life experiences and apply those within a career pathways context

WIOA Purpose	PLA Support
Enhancing the strategic role for States and elected officials, and Local WDBs in the public workforce system by increasing flexibility to tailor services to meet employer and worker needs . . .	PLA aligns and integrates postsecondary education and training with the public workforce system as identified by the Local WDB, providing meaningful connection points between career goals and educational credential to reach them
Streamlining service delivery across multiple programs by requiring colocation, coordination, and integration of activities and information to make the system understandable and accessible.	PLA is a key part of streamlining service delivery across multiple programs since it integrates and documents
Supporting the alignment of the workforce investment, education, and economic development systems in support of a comprehensive, accessible and high-quality workforce development system . . .	PLA helps eliminate duplication of training expenditures, creating PLA bridges between the workforce board and the colleges to ensure that U.S. Department of Labor funds spent on training are provided within the shortest routes to credential attainment
Improving the quality and labor market relevance of workforce investment, education, and economic development efforts by promoting the use of industry and sector partnerships, career pathways, and regional service delivery strategies in order to provide America’s workers with the skills and credentials that will enable them to secure and advance in employment	PLA ensures that job seekers build upon what they already have learned, adding only what they need to obtain appropriate credentials for employability; Local WDBs have identified sectors and the skills needed in those sectors to align with PLA utilization
Promoting accountability using core indicators of performance measured across all WIOA authorized programs . . .	PLA promotes financial and operational accountability by better aligning and utilizing program resources allows for better aligning of program design and outcomes and helps focus the role and value of PLA for all partners
Increasing the prosperity and economic growth of workers, employers, communities, regions, and States	PLA incentivizes the attainment of credentials for adult job seekers as most high-quality jobs are projected to require postsecondary credentials

WIOA Purpose	PLA Support
Providing workforce development activities through statewide and local workforce development systems to increase employment, retention and earnings of participants and to increase industry-recognized postsecondary credential attainment	PLA provides support for work-based learning along with a vehicle for further incorporation of creative learn-and-learn strategies that are necessary for many adults to participate in high education; sector-based initiatives of the Local WDBs provide the information and employer connections to ensure the relevance of credentials for current and future jobs

For the reasons cited above, the PLA has an important role to play in enhancing programs and services to achieve the purposes of the WIOA. Identifying the skills of job seekers and accelerating progress on shortest paths to employer-relevant credentials is a key driver of the law. PLA is a valuable tool that a workforce board and its service and training partners can incorporate as part of the assessment process for enrolling individuals into training programs at a college or university. The PLA can be used to encourage individuals to enroll in college courses when they might not otherwise do so. In summary, PLA benefits for a Local WDB can include:

- *Maximizing training investments* by reducing the costs associated with tuition, supplies, and supportive services for training participants;
- *Increasing training participation* by providing individuals with easier access to higher education;
- *Promoting improved performance outcomes* by decreasing the classroom hours required for completion;
- *Stimulating new partnership opportunities* by strengthening the relationship of the one-stop system with its higher education partners.

Standards of assessment used in PLA policies are highly aligned to policy standards of excellence deployed within the design and structure of WIOA. While each higher education institution has its own criteria regarding credit for prior learning, most require that the previous experience be connected to the learning objectives of the training coursework being pursued. Some examples include:

- Industry certifications, professional licensures, or apprenticeships;
- Testing, such as the College Level Examination Program (CLEP), or a “Challenge Exam” for a particular course;
- Certificates of training, work samples, awards and honors, job descriptions, performance evaluations, evidence of self-directed learning, and resumes;

- Prior Military Training Credit via the ACE College Credit Recommendation Service or through direct evaluation of the customer's service school transcripts; and
- Prior workplace, volunteer, governmental, and nonprofit trainings, as well as industry certifications via ACE's non-military CREDIT guide.

While PLA is clearly an asset in addressing WIOA priorities, it is important to note that it is an allowable expenditure using WIOA funding. Nothing in the WIOA legislation, related regulations, TEGL's, TEN's and the Uniform Guidance restricts the engagement of spending for PLA. Local WDBs will need to research individual state policies, including the state WIOA plan, to identify any policies that directly address the cost categories where PLA costs will be charged. In some states, such as Indiana, there are existing policies that support and endorse PLA and its utilization in the public workforce system. If the existing rules do not expressly prohibit PLA engagement, then PLA is permitted. States may also wish to target and incentivize the use of PLAs to certain high-priority occupations that have been identified as key to economic growth in their states, and local areas may wish to do the same. For many Local WDBs, the issue of employing PLA is then a matter of local policy and prioritization of policies as they reflect the resources available. Since PLA will ultimately save money and reduce training time, the use of PLA is a prudent choice for many local workforce development areas.

In the menu of WIOA services, PLA may be categorized as part of individualized career services. Specifically, WIOA regulation section 678.430 states in part:

...(b) Individualized career services must be made available if determined to be appropriate in order for an individual to obtain or retain employment. These services include the following services, as consistent with program requirements and Federal cost principles: (1) Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, which may include - (i) Diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools; and (ii) In-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals....¹

Moreover, WIOA regulation section 679.130 includes PLA as one of the best practices that State Boards should assist Governors in identifying and disseminating. Specifically, it states in part:

...(3) Effective training programs that respond to real-time labor market analysis, that effectively use direct assessment and prior learning assessment to measure an individual's prior knowledge, skills, competencies, and experiences for adaptability, to support efficient placement into employment or career pathways...²

¹ Federal Register Volume 81, Number 161, August 19, 2016, Part V, Volume 2 of 2, 20CFR 676, 677, and 678, page 56013.

² Federal Register Volume 81, Number 161, August 19, 2016, Part VI, 20CFR 603, 651, 652, page 56373.

E. National Association of Workforce Board Related Work to Prior Learning Assessment

The National Association of Workforce Boards, in collaboration with Rutgers University School of Management and Labor Relations through a grant from the Lumina Foundation, completed a related pilot project to study and institutionalize Adult College Completion (ACC) and the Public Workforce System. This project culminated in the research report “Adult College Completion through the Workforce System” published by the Education and Employment Research Center, School of Management and Labor Relations at Rutgers University³. The project was led by Heather McKay of the Education and Employment Research Center of the School of Management Relations at Rutgers University. Michael Lawrence of Community Workforce Advancements and Roy Vanderford of Center of Workforce Innovation also participated in the research and pilot projects as part of this report. This project examined efforts in four states with the first wave in Mississippi and Pennsylvania and the second wave in Indiana and Oklahoma.

This report examined the culture changes and challenges and outlined some potential solutions and responses to ACC. Below are the most important challenges that emerged and an updated based upon the impact of the implementation of the WIOA. Generally speaking, the culture and interaction between postsecondary education and the public workforce system identified in the ACC report has not changed significantly since that time or due to the passage of WIOA.

Please see Attachment D for review and update on this work since the passing of the WIOA.

F. PLA Model Development Within Workforce Development Systems

A key to expanded use of the PLA tool within the workforce development system will be the development, incorporation, and promotion of PLAs within multiple existing components of the system. Described below are several arenas where incorporation can occur. A common framework of Career Pathways promoted by WIOA should be the ongoing point of reference for all strategies. PLAs can provide the entry points for adults to connect to the pathways at the right points and the framework for ongoing work-based learning and classroom learning focused on high-quality jobs as the end goal.

³ The report is found at <https://smlr.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/documents/Research%20Report%20Final%2010-3-14.pdf>.

Customer Assessment & PLA

When the public workforce system completes career services through an initial intake and assessment and then completes an individualized career services plan that often includes additional assessment, this stage is the appropriate time to inquire about significant learning from previous jobs or other experiences. Other experiences may include a wide range from online courses to volunteer work. Once identified, further exploration and assessment can be completed via PLA tied to relationships established with local colleges.

Rapid Response & PLA

Incorporation of PLA-related questions is particularly appropriate during Rapid Response client assessments, as transferable skills and shortest pathways to new jobs with comparable wages are topics addressed at that point. The introduction of PLA can serve as a morale boost for impacted workers as they are able to identify the value of their prior work and life experiences.

Promising Practice: Indiana employs a statewide Common Worker Survey for job seeker intake. The Common Worker Survey asks information related to the nature of the layoff, interest in education, rates of pay, desired job titles and types of assistance desired. With this presentation, PLA potential may be addressed with the inclusion of two additional questions to determine if (a) the job seeker feels that specific skills and knowledge have been acquired on the job and (b) the job seeker understands that the skills that have been acquired may offer credits toward college or technical schools. Rapid response presentations and orientations can easily be modified to include PLA questions and connections.

Incumbent Worker Training & PLA

Most local workforce areas have a high percentage of the employed workforce with an education level of “some college.” Some of these workers have specialized certificates in key occupational areas, but more often these workers are ones that started a college major and did not complete it. Many employers of these workers have tuition reimbursement plans that can pay for college completion. PLAs can play an important role in return-to-college strategies by engaging the employer directly in assessing the knowledge gained from certain work experiences or from company-provided training. Once the analysis is done for one worker at an employer’s site, the documentation for PLA becomes readily available for other workers at the same site.

Promising Practice: Ivy Tech Community College, Indiana’s statewide community college system, has developed the “Achieve Your Degree” program and is promoting it with employers. The program works with employers to allow their tuition reimbursement funds to be applied at the end of a course, preventing the need for students to pay for courses with their own funds and then later be reimbursed. PLA is being used in the process to potentially shorten the time for degree completion and to lessen employer expenditures. As part of the process, a new state program, Next Level Jobs, provides Workforce Ready grants to both unemployed and incumbent workers for training tied to demand occupations. These funds can also be blended with the PLA process.

Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) & PLA

Most Local WDBs have established a maximum spending amount, or ceiling, for expenditures on an Individual Training Account (ITA) for a customer using WIOA funding. In some cases, the amount of funding needed for completion of a degree exceeds the limit, but with aggressive incorporation of PLA the funds (and time) needed for completion can fall within the established limit, thus making completion of a degree a much more viable option. This can also be an element of region-wide application under new WIOA Regional Plans, as many of the regional plans include goals for multiple workforce areas adopting uniform rules and procedures related to use of funds for ITAs and other customer services.

Promising Practice: The Southwest Corner (PA) Workforce area has established PLA policies and procedures in partnership with a local eligible training provider, California University of Pennsylvania. Together they have implemented an aggressive, coordinated approach for PLA that has served to decrease costs and shorten time to completion of the degree.

Sector-Based Employer Strategies & PLA

Most Local WDBs collaborate with their local education and training providers to engage employers in planning to meet workforce needs on a sector-by-sector basis. These groups provide a natural connection point for expanded use of PLA, as many employers in a sector provide similar types of job experiences and require similar skills for proficiency in the jobs. It is often possible to look at knowledge gained in certain occupations across multiple employers or training providers in a sector and to offer assessments of these jobs, trainings, certifications, etc. that would be applicable to multiple employers or trainers within the same sector. In some cases, employers have already performed job task analysis for an occupation to connect to applicant certifications such as the National Career Readiness Certificate, awarded at different levels of proficiency.

One particularly efficient PLA pathway tied to these sector-based trainings is the development and utilization of “crosswalks.” Crosswalks, which may also be known as mappings or pre-certifications, are developed by college faculty pre-evaluating a given training, job, certification, or other formalized training for college credit. Thus, any student who has completed this training automatically receives credit at the college, without the need for an additional assessment such as an exam, after submitting the proper documentation. This process, once established, provides a more guaranteed, clearer, and more efficient pathway to convert sector trainings into credit. This can be done in conjunction with Local Workforce Boards, employers, training providers, or industry certification organizations.

Promising Practice: CAEL and the ECMC Foundation have recently completed a pilot project working with four local workforce areas (Seattle-King County, Opportunity Inc., Philadelphia Works, and Miami-Dade County) and community colleges to expand PLA as a tool for the workforce development system, particularly with the use of crosswalks. The workforce development boards and their community college partners have selected trainings, supported by board funding, to be analyzed and assessed for credit at the colleges, so that clients completing those programs will automatically receive college credit once they enroll. Combined with improved referral processes and coordination between the two organizations at each of the sites, this effort is being employed in these areas to identify and promote PLA avenues to benefit their customers, both job seekers and employers. CAEL will be producing a separate public report on the results of this pilot in August 2018.

On-the-Job Training (OJT) & PLA

One option that exists for greater coordination between the workforce development system and colleges is to create a PLA-driven program that is designed in partnership between colleges and the workforce development system. On-the-job training (OJT) is a widely-used training approach in many local workforce development programs, with policies and procedures already in place in state and local systems in alignment with WIOA. While OJTs already require training plans to be established and monitored, the process of creating training plans can be augmented by engagement of a college sponsor from the beginning, with work-based learning specifically designed (and pre-approved by the college) as transferable credit to the college. In some cases, work-based learning can be combined with classroom instruction provided by the colleges for even stronger alignment and to introduce trainees to education and training pathways available at the colleges.

Work Experience & PLA

Similar to credit-based OJT described above, WIOA also allows paid work experience for certain individuals needing such assistance to enter or re-enter the labor market. Colleges can be engaged from the beginning in these program structures to design work experiences that automatically provide creation of credit for successful completion. The difference between paid work experiences and OJT programs is the “employer of record”. With OJTs, the employer hires individuals and is subsidized for the provision of training. With paid work experience, the employer of record may be an intermediary organization.

Non-Credit Courses & PLA

Non-credit courses offered by various education and training organizations (including industry-based training providers) offer many types of non-credit training. In many cases, PLA is already a factor in determining the readiness of students in these classes. Whether the education and training is for required continuing education, upgrading current skills, or enhance entry level skills, what a student already knows is often a key factor in what non-credit classes are appropriate for their ongoing education. The public workforce system is currently embracing these training opportunities as they get more employers engaged.

Apprenticeship & PLA

The WIOA embraces and expands the value of learning by working with the emphasis on Registered Apprenticeship, Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship the most significant program. Apprenticeship is a work-based learning process that utilizes on the job mastery of competency-based learning with a designated length of hours on the job then off-site training to complement that learned on the job. This learning is rigorously documented by a designated supervisor. Because of this rigorous documentation of the competencies, Registered Apprenticeship is in a unique position to comparatively easily document and assess the Prior Learning of the potential apprentice student and then customize the apprenticeship to only those competencies and corresponding time required to master the occupation.

Cohort Training & PLA

One of the opportunities offered by WIOA is the provision of Cohort Training. Cohort training emphasizes a class (or cohort) of individuals receiving training in a traditional class as a group. This cohort, which can be for either credit or non-credit, is usually offered in areas of high demand for employer(s) in sector(s) that have a high demand for specific

skilled position. This training may be offered with work-based learning where possible and also may be offered to either entry level or upgrade skills. In either case, utilizing PLA is an excellent choice to determine the specific skill sets needed and the most efficient and shortest track from the current less skilled state to the return to higher productive work.

Promising Practice: Lancaster Workforce Development Board, with a workforce development grant from Community Reinvestment Funds from a local regional bank, is offering cohort-based training in Industrial Maintenance Technician, Basic Welding, Introduction to Manufacturing and Facilities Maintenance Technician. All programs are designed for entry level workers and rapid employment. PLA could be a key part of this training while assessing skills needs.

Using Labor Market Information to Identify PLA Opportunities

Many Local WDBs may consider recognizing PLA as a part of their assessment of their labor force. PLA provides opportunities to more efficiently address the needs of the job seeker and the employer by providing a more effective and timely measure of skill attainment. As part of the Local WDB's responsibilities to assess the local labor market, the level of PLA evident in the labor force is an important indicator of allocating resources and addressing the PLA status.

There are two principle data sets that can help a Local WDB determine the level of PLA in the local labor market: 1) Educational Attainment Data, and 2) Online Profile Data. Education Attainment data, provided by the US Census Bureau, indicates the level of education achieved by segments of the local population over the age of 25. The data are broken out by gender and by race/ethnicity for the following categories: less than 9th grade, 9th grade to 12th grade, high school diploma, some college, Associate Degrees, Bachelor Degrees, graduate degree and higher.

Online Profile Data, provided by private companies like Emsi, identifies the current skills of the local labor force, which can then be compared to the needs of local employers. These Online Profile Data for the local labor force could indicate potential for relevant PLA opportunities.

Joint Planning Between Community Colleges & Workforce Development Systems

The recent process of developing WIOA state, regional and local plans has led to new levels of coordination, or at least new plans to coordinate, between community college systems and workforce development systems in many states. With the emphasis in WIOA on career pathways that include work-based learning, PLA potentially take a more

prominent position in joint planning. At a minimum, workforce development systems and front-line staff of the American Job Centers need to understand the procedures employed by their local colleges in order to prepare customers with the right knowledge and connect them with the right people.

Promising Practice: CAEL is working with Ivy Tech to develop a new PLA Accelerator with the functionality to show the crosswalks they have developed from certifications, military, and exams to Ivy Tech college courses. This is being piloted in Indianapolis and will be promoted in an orientation module for new students in the Fall. Per Ivy Tech personnel, the tool is scheduled for completion in September 2018. Ivy Tech also has some other emerging, related projects that have the potential to support the necessary shift toward a more PLA-embedded culture. The PLA work done by Ivy Tech and CAEL will be promoted through Indiana's WorkOne office (Indiana's American Job Centers).

G. Critical Elements for Expanded Use of PLA

The timing is excellent for expansion of PLA as a key component for connecting the workforce development system to the higher education system for acceleration of production of degrees, a key component of economic success for all regions. However, to accomplish this, there are a number of critical success factors:

1. Training institutions need to first streamline and embrace their own procedures for PLA, with PLA-related questions asked at the time of admission and in presentations to potential adult students.
2. Workforce development system partners at the front line of service delivery, particularly during initial intake and assessment processes, need to set up ongoing communication channels with their local colleges to understand PLA processes and to establish points of contact for referrals and joint counseling of students.
3. Workforce development partners in the American Job Centers need to embed the right questions at the right points in the intake and assessment processes to ascertain PLA potential of customers.
4. Workforce development planners, in their required role of labor market analysis, need to provide information to their Local WDBs on the number of adults with partial college completion who would be prime candidates for PLA to complete college degrees.
5. State workforce development agencies need to promote the use of PLA via its networks of the American Job Centers, making it clear how PLA costs are allowable and in what cost categories.

6. Workforce development partners need to determine where PLA can best connect to existing programs to improve outcomes, such as Rapid Response assessments of transferable skills/knowledge OJT where work-based learning can be designed to ensure PLA credit for the OJT work experience.

7. Employer outreach staff of the workforce development system and the colleges need to be jointly trained to promote incumbent worker training options that include PLA as part of the process, particularly with employers who provide education benefits that can be employed more effectively with greater return on investment.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- B. Contacts for Effective Practices
- C. PLA Reference Material from Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL)
- D. Adult College Complete through the Workforce System, A Research Report on Lessons Learned from a Multistate Intervention Initiative, Rutgers University. (<https://smlr.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/documents/Research%20Report%20Final%202010-3-14.pdf>) A review of the Summary of Findings and update based upon changes impacted by the WIOA.

Attachment A: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. What is Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)?

Simply put, Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) is a process that recognizes the knowledge that an individual has acquired outside of the traditional classroom setting. It awards college-level credit based on the learning and skills that have been achieved from previous work and life experience, including military and/or corporate training.

PLA uses well established, researched and validated methods for assessing non-collegiate learning for college credit. It allows individuals to demonstrate knowledge and/or skills in a particular field(s) and have that learning evaluated for college credit.

Sometimes PLA is informally referred to as “Work Experience Credit,” or even “Credit for Life Experience.” However, it is important to note, that there must be documented **knowledge** for work or life experience to qualify for prior learning credit.

2. What are the different methods of PLA?

Generally, PLA falls into four primary categories based on how it is assessed: (1) Credit by Examination, (2) Review of Non-College Training, (3) Portfolio Assessment, and (4) Demonstration of Skills. The following “chart was developed by CAEL to help identify the best method of PLA to use in a particular situation.

PLA METHOD	WHAT IT MEANS	WHO MIGHT BE A GOOD CANDIDATE?	WHO MIGHT NOT BE AN IDEAL CANDIDATE?
Credit by Examination	Test-based assessment; a student takes an examination to demonstrate what they know.	Those who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Want quick credit • Have significant knowledge in one or more areas 	People who have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Testing anxiety • More skills-based knowledge
Review of Non-College Training	Evaluation of non-credit training and/or certifications to determine if they provide college-level learning and how many credits they are equivalent to.	People with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Military experience • Industry certifications • <i>Documented</i> company-provided training 	Those with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More informal knowledge or experiences
Portfolio Assessment	Portfolios are often used to evaluate past learning that cannot be captured by training reviews or exams. They are much like reports where a student documents his or her past learning, describes what they learned, and provides evidence to back it up.	Those who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have extensive and wide-ranging knowledge and college-level writing skills • Are self-directed 	People who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not have strong writing skills • Are looking for quick credit • Have very specific, narrow knowledge

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<p>Demonstration of Skill</p>	<p>Demonstrations of skill involve performing an activity or skill in front of a faculty member. This method is common in technical fields (e.g. welding).</p>	<p>People who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have skills-based knowledge and/or hands-on technical expertise 	<p>Those who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not have technical, hands-on knowledge
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3. What are some typical standards for assessing prior learning?

For the most part, each higher education institution has its own criteria regarding credit for prior learning. However, most require that the previous experience be connected to the learning objectives of the training coursework being pursued. Some examples include:

- Industry certifications, professional licensures, or apprenticeships
- Testing, such as the College Level Examination Program (CLEP), or a “Challenge Exam” for a particular course
- Certificates of training, work samples, awards and honors, job descriptions, performance evaluations, evidence of self-directed learning, and resumes
- Prior Military Training Credit via the American Council on Education (ACE) College Credit Recommendation Service or through direct evaluation of the customer’s service school transcripts
- Prior workplace, volunteer, governmental, and nonprofit trainings, as well as industry certifications via ACE’s non-military CREDIT guide.

4. Where does PLA fall in the menu of WIOA services?

PLA may be categorized as part of individualized career services. Specifically, WIOA regulation section 678.430 states in part:

...(b) Individualized career services must be made available if determined to be appropriate in order for an individual to obtain or retain employment. These services include the following services, as consistent with program requirements and Federal cost principles: (1) Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, which may include – (i) Diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools; and (ii) in-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals....⁴

⁴ Federal Register Volume 81, Number 161, August 19, 2016, Part V, Volume 2 of 2, 20CFR 676, 677, and 678, page 56013.

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Moreover, WIOA regulation section 679.130 includes PLA as one of the best practices that State Boards should assist Governors in identifying and disseminating. Specifically, it states in part:

*...(3) Effective training programs that respond to real-time labor market analysis, that effectively use direct assessment and prior learning assessment to measure an individual's prior knowledge, skills, competencies, and experiences for adaptability, to support efficient placement into employment or career pathways...*⁵

It is important to note that although the federal WIOA regulations do not prohibit PLA, each State may establish its own specific policies, regulations, and/or restrictions regarding its utilization. Therefore, a WDB should research state requirements when establishing its local PLA policies and procedures.

5. What are some of the PLA benefits for a Workforce Development Board (WDB)?

PLA is a valuable tool that a WDB can incorporate as part of the assessment process for enrolling individuals into a training programs at a college or university. Because prior learning credit recognizes an individual's existing knowledge and skills in a particular field(s), it enables the trainee to complete coursework more quickly than if he or she had to take classes for learning that was already possessed. Some of the PLA benefits for a WDB include:

- *Maximizing training investments* by reducing the costs associated with tuition, supplies, and supportive services for training participants.
- *Increasing training participation* by providing individuals with easier access to higher education.
- *Promoting improved performance outcomes* by decreasing the classroom hours required for completion.
- *Stimulating new partnership opportunities* by strengthening the relationship of the One-Stop system with its higher education counterparts.

6. How is PLA used in the One-Stop system?

As discussed in the response to FAQ 4 above, PLA may be categorized as part of individualized career services. It is typically used when enrolling a customer with significant work, military, or volunteer experience into training activities. The goal is to help the individual receive college-level credit for his or her prior learning.

For its part, the One-Stop first determines if the individual is suitable and eligible for training services. Next, if it appears that the customer possesses significant knowledge,

⁵ Federal Register Volume 81, Number 161, August 19, 2016, Part VI, 20CFR 603, 651, 652, page 56373.

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skills, and/or certifications that may qualify for college credit, then the One-Stop refers the individual to the respective higher education institution for prior learning assessment.

The college completes the PLA based on its standard practices and reports back the results to the customer and the One-Stop.

7. How would a WDB begin utilizing PLA as part of its standard practices?

Generally, a WDB should take the following steps to establish local policies and procedures for utilizing PLA:

- a. Research with the State to determine if there are any statewide policies and/or restrictions it may have regarding the use of PLA in the local One-Stop system.
- b. Contact local colleges to ascertain how credit for prior learning is assessed at their particular institutions, including the identification of potential candidates, the types of prior learning that is generally credited, the typical amount of credits issued, and the costs related to the assessment.
- c. Research possible funding sources that may be utilized in addition to WIOA to pay for PLA.
- d. Establish local policies and related procedures for use of PLA. Some items to consider include:
 - what funding sources will be used for PLA
 - what funding caps may be imposed for PLA
 - how potential PLA candidates will be identified by One-Stop personnel
 - how candidates will be referred to higher education institutions for assessment
 - how PLA results will be documented in the individual's case file
- e. Train personnel on the use of PLA in the One-Stop system, with significant emphasis placed on how to identify and refer potential candidates. In doing so, the WDB should have local colleges participate in the development of the staff training curricula, or the WDB may even request that the local higher education institutions deliver portions of the actual training itself.

8. How could One-Stop staff identify potential candidates for PLA?

Once an individual has been determined suitable and eligible for training, then the One-Stop staff should consider whether the individual has tangible (1) prior work experience, (2) prior military experience, and/or (3) prior volunteer service that relates to the occupation for which they will be training. Additionally, One-Stop personnel should also

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identify and evaluate any previous certificates and/or certifications that the individual may have been awarded.

If it appears that the individual has significant knowledge and/or skills that may be appropriate for possible prior learning credit, then the One-Stop personnel may refer him or her to the respective college for PLA based on the local WDB's specific policies. The "cheat sheet" included under FAQ 2 provides additional guidance.

9. Are there any easily accessible resources available to see what assessments of prior learning already exist for many large employers and governmental organizations (including the military), industry-wide work-based learning credentials, and industry certifications and apprenticeships that could be recognized as part of a PLA strategy for college credit?

Sometimes an industry-wide credential, such a CompTIA Certification in the Information Technology Sector, can help identify a work-based learning credential that is easily aligned and recognized by many colleges. The American Council on Education (ACE) is a major coordinating body that can assist in helping Local Workforce Boards and the participating college(s) quickly identify PLA appropriate credentials or other related learning obtained as part of work, though their ACE CREDIT program.

To date, ACE CREDIT has helped about 600 corporations, professional associations, labor unions and government agencies, including Starbucks, Jiffy Lube, the Federal Aviation Administration Academy, and the National Security Agency to evaluate in-house training and education programs, and their online, searchable database includes credit recommendations for over 35,000 trainings. For example, the manager training program at McDonald's Hamburger University yields an average recommendation of 23 credits under PLA. Please refer to <http://www2.acenet.edu/credit/?fuseaction=browse.main> for additional information on organizations and/or specific courses for which ACE has provided credit recommendations.

In addition to businesses, ACE's Military Guide presents credit recommendations and detailed summaries for formal courses and occupations offered by all branches of the military. It includes evaluated courses and occupations from 1954 to the present. Credit recommendations appear on the service member's Joint Services Transcript (JST). Please refer to <http://www.acenet.edu/news-room/Pages/Military-Guide-Online.aspx> for additional information.

The National College Credit Recommendation Service (NCCRS) is a smaller credit recommendation service, which also makes similar credit recommendations to the ACE CREDIT program, although it tends to focus on organizations and business located in the northeastern United States: <http://www.nationalccrs.org/>.

Additionally, many local colleges, higher education systems, and even states have created crosswalk lists (see "Sector-Based Employer Strategies & PLA" above) that have

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assessed common sector and workplace trainings and certifications (many of which may be smaller or more regional) for college credit at their institutions. These may be worth investigating, as they may have more local applicability.

10. What are some local areas or states that may be looked to as “best practices” for their utilization of PLA?

As addressed in the white paper accompanying these FAQs, Local WDBs that are effectively utilizing PLA include:

- Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County <http://www.seakingwdc.org>
- Philadelphia Works <http://www.philaworks.org/>
- CareerSource South Florida (Miami) <http://www.careersourcesfl.com/>
- Hampton Roads Workforce Development Board (Norfolk) <http://opp-inc.org>

11. Why would employers be interested in PLA?

Because prior learning credit recognizes an individual’s existing skills in a particular field(s), it enables a person to complete college-level coursework more quickly than if he or she had to take classes for skills that were already possessed. Therefore, businesses may also benefit from PLA in the following ways:

- *Maximizing tuition assistance program investments* by eliminating costs associated with coursework for which the worker is already proficient.
- *Promoting employee retention* by recognizing the documented talent and abilities of its workforce.
- *Connecting current workforce skills to college-level learning* by certifying the knowledge and skills of its workforce.
- *Validating company training programs, including work experience and on-the-job training* by having its curricula verified and/or endorsed by the university or college system.

Attachment B: Contacts for Effective Practices

- General Contact—All Effective Practices & PLA

Michael Lawrence
Community Workforce Advancements, LLC
26558 Burrsville Road
Denton, MD 21629
Email: mlawrence@communityworkforceadvancements.com
Phone: (410)479-3494

- Rapid Response & PLA

Robyn Minton-Holmes
Center for Workforce Innovations
2804 Boilermaker Court, Suite E
Valparaiso, IN 46383
Email: rminton@cwicorp.com
Phone: (219) 462-2940

- Incumbent Worker Training & PLA

Roy Vanderford
Center for Workforce Innovations
2804 Boilermaker Court, Suite E
Valparaiso, IN 46383
Email : rvanderford@cwicorp.com
Phone : (317) 440-8643

- Eligible Training Provider List & PLA

Lisa Neil
Southwest Training Services, Inc.
90 West Chestnut Street, Suite 150 Lower Level
Washington, PA 15301
Email: lnail@swtraining.org
Phone: (724) 229-1350, Ext. 237

Attachment B: Contacts for Effective Practices

- Cohort Training & PLA

Cathy Rychalsky
Lancaster County Workforce Development Board
313 West Liberty Street
Lancaster, PA 17603
Email: crychalsky@lancastercountywib.com
Phone: (717) 735-0333

- Using Labor Market Information & PLA

Jason George
EMSI
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Moscow, ID 83843
Phone: (208) 883-3500
Jason.George@economicmodeling.com

John Hawkins
EMSI
409 S. Jackson St.
Moscow, ID 83843
Phone: (949) 290-0103
Email: jhawkins@economicmodeling.com

- Joint Planning Between Community Colleges and Workforce Development System

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Attachment C: PLA Reference Material from Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL)

❖ [Fueling the Race to Postsecondary Success \(and the executive summary\)](#)

With support from Lumina Foundation for Education, CAEL collected data on 62,475 students at 48 higher education institutions that offer PLA. The report presents our findings on the comparison of PLA students with non-PLA students in terms of earned degrees, persistence, and time to degree. Such a large-scale look at PLA credit earning and academic outcomes has never before been done.

❖ [PLA is Your Business](#)

PLA is a term used for the various methods that postsecondary institutions employ to evaluate a student's experiential learning for college credit. As more institutions embrace PLA, two of the questions they frequently have are, "What should my organization be charging for the various PLA services we want to offer?" and "What are the costs to my organization?"

The answers to these questions require institutions to consider the overall PLA Business Model. This report explores: what is meant by business model, how decisions about a PLA program's structure or implementation affects the business model, how decisions about the pricing of PLA services are made, and what institutions should keep in mind as they examine their own business models for PLA.

❖ [State Policy Approaches to Support PLA](#)

This guide is intended to serve as a resource for state leaders who wish to promote PLA policy, whether through new higher education policy or through legislation. It includes background information on PLA and why a state- or system-wide approach can be helpful, information on the kinds of policies that other states and systems are adopting, and case studies of both general approaches to state- or system-wide PLA and approaches designed specifically to benefit veterans.

❖ [Random Access: The Latino Experience with PLA](#)

National efforts to address the degree completion goals of the country cannot succeed without focusing on strategies to improve the educational attainment of Latinos. Latinos are the nation's second largest racial or ethnic group, and growing. Compared to other racial/ ethnic populations, however, Latinos have lower rates of educational attainment and lower rates of degree completion, on average.

Through analysis of more than 32,000 student academic records, as well as interviews with Latino students and PLA administrators, the study examines how Latino students

Attachment C: PLA Reference Material from Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL)

engage with PLA in terms of methods used, number of credits earned, and areas of study for which credits are earned.

❖ **Employer Views on the Value of PLA**

Since 1984, CAEL has worked with employers to design and implement employee tuition assistance and career and educational advising programs. In recent years, CAEL has seen growing employer interest in PLA. It helps their employees earn credit for college-level learning acquired outside of the traditional classroom, which saves both time and money in meeting educational goals.

This CAEL research brief, produced in partnership with Prometric, presents highlights from conversations with 19 U.S. employers representing a range of industries on the topic of PLA. The conversations address the value of PLA to both workers and corporations, as well as employers' views on PLA as an allowable expense within their tuition assistance programs.

Attachment D: National Association of Workforce Board Related Work to Prior Learning Assessment

The National Association of Workforce Boards, in collaboration with Rutgers University School of Management and Labor Relations through a grant from the Lumina Foundation, completed a related pilot project to study and institutionalize Adult College Completion (ACC) and the Public Workforce System. This project culminated in the research report “Adult College Completion through the Workforce System” published by the Education and Employment Research Center, School of Management and Labor Relations at Rutgers University⁶. The project was led by Heather McKay. Michael Lawrence and Roy Vanderford also participated in the research and pilot projects as part of this report. This project examined efforts in four states with the first wave in Mississippi and Pennsylvania and the second wave in Indiana and Oklahoma.

The report examined the culture changes and challenges and outlines some potential solutions. Below is a review and WIOA comments from the Summary of Findings in the report.

Attitudes toward ACC in the Workforce Development System

- At the beginning of the ACC Initiative, perceptions of college varied among workforce professionals, with some workforce staff valuing college completion, others completely skeptical of it, and the majority falling somewhere in the middle. Local area variations in population and industry can affect how college is valued.
- Those who value ACC see it as beneficial for the client and as a logical use of WIA funds.
- Many value a two-year degree but were more skeptical of bachelor’s degrees and beyond.
- Complete skeptics did not see the value of a degree over a certificate or short-term program and did not believe that college could be directly linked to job listings.
- Workforce centers often focus on investing in short-term skills-based credentials to get clients back to work quickly. While this can be a good strategy in some industries and for company openings, it does not always result in employment.

Promising practices to address these issues include trainings and information sessions to convey to workforce center staff and stakeholders the value of a college degree for both clients and the region as a whole. Additionally, it is helpful to convey that ACC is a new way of doing business, not just a short-term program.

WIOA Update: The implementation of WIOA continued the move toward learning by working and employer-based and employer involved education and training. Related to ACC, the WIOA emphasis and requirement of a certification for education and training

⁶ The report is found at <https://smlr.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/documents/Research%20Report%20Final%2010-3-14.pdf>.

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programs provided a move toward a degree as one of those certifications, however, the overall move is toward short-term education and training and greater employer led training in areas such as Registered Apprenticeship.

The Role of Intake and Case Management in ACC

- Intake and case management processes are not uniform, and this can create challenges for one-size-fits-all approaches to implementing ACC.
- Frontline staff are required to let clients lead the conversation about training options and training choices—thus, client suggestions at times lead the conversation rather than strong career counseling and intrusive career advising.
- Clients may not be informed about their choices and may not volunteer information about prior college experiences because of shame or embarrassment for not completing, time out of college, or other reasons.
- Workforce center staff are not always well informed about higher education and may need further training to provide appropriate guidance to ACC-eligible clients.
- Clients under financial duress who may be qualified applicants for ACC often choose certificate programs instead of degree programs so that they can get back to work quickly.

Promising practices to address these issues include standardizing intake procedures and creating better strategies for frontline workers to convey the long-term importance of a degree, as well as training frontline workers in how to offer stronger educational guidance to allow clients to make an *informed choice*. Additionally, training frontline staff in alternate sources of funding that can supplement or replace WIA training monies could help put ACC within reach for clients.

WIOA Update: The role of intake and case management continues to be a key issue for ACC and PLA. The Seattle King County efforts under this overall project demonstrate some impressive front-line staff training. The review of WIOA implementation does not offer much change from this 2014 report. WIOA does offer the implementation of the One-Stop Operator with their role of coordination and collaboration of activities among all the partners in the American Job Center. The professional development role of the One-Stop Operator would be an ideal setting to provide consistent front-line staff training on PLA and address the issues noted above.

The Role of Institutions of Higher Education

- Proximity to colleges can be a challenge in some local areas.
- Relationships between workforce development and higher education are often non-existent or limited to the financial aid and admissions offices.

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- When relationships are built, they can be mutually beneficial, with the workforce center helping schools to improve retention and bring near-completers back into the fold, and workforce centers can help create a curriculum to make the connection between college degrees and jobs.

Promising practices to address these issues include creating shared physical spaces (e.g., workforce center office on or adjacent to community colleges), sharing staff, and working to maintain connections across multiple divisions within the college systems.

WIOA Update: With WIOA (as with other locally driven programs), local context often trumps many other issues. Understanding this local context related to the proximity of and relationship to institutions of higher education are key to the success of ACC. The WIOA provides opportunity to build collaborative relationships with institutions of higher education through the American Job Center. The assistance and case management of a usually non-traditional student will help provide for completion and retention for the school.

Policy and Funding Issues

- The stability of funding for government-based programs was a challenge during the grant period that undermined some workforce center staff's confidence in the ability to make long-term commitments to training.
- ITA allocation is inconsistent; in some areas, it is sufficient to facilitate ACC, but in others, it is quite restricted, or funding caps are too low to cover tuition.
- In some areas, local policies about ITA spending can be a challenge, such as required completion of the first semester of schooling and demonstration of the ability to finish their degree before funding is dispersed to clients.
- Funding conditions may deter some potential completers (e.g., returning tuition payments if a class is failed).
- Training options are set by the Eligible Training Provider Lists (ETPLs), which are set by local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBS) and may favor short-term programs offering job-specific, low skill credentials.
- Training must lead to a job on a High Demand Occupation (HDO) list, which are typically set by states and can limit creativity among frontline staff at workforce centers.

Potential solutions include an examination of policies at the state and local level to identify items that can hinder college completion and working to adapt these policies. Common policies of concern include ITA caps, the ETPL and HDO lists, not only in their formal structure but also in how they are understood and operationalized in the workforce centers.

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WIOA Update: The WIOA emphasis on work-based learning and education and training more integrated with employers and business results in some areas of less traditional Occupational Skills Training through the Individual Training Account (ITA) through the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Recent funding at the national level (at the time of publication in May 2018) shows an increase in funding across workforce development programs that will provide opportunities for Local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) to pursue innovative initiatives that encompass PLA. Due to the WIOA allocation formula some states are receiving significant increases ranging up to 30% while others are receiving comparatively modest reductions of approximately 6% - 7%. In many states and local areas there is opportunities presented by state, local and foundation funds that provide innovative efforts to embed PLA and ACC in the public workforce system.

Summary

ACC is the higher education version of PLA. As Lumina Foundation data has reported, there are thousands of individuals with some college and no degree. Some of those thousands are working. The public workforce system at this point in the WIOA's innovation time is an excellent opportunity to research, pilot, implement and embed a greater integration of program delivery with postsecondary education. The public workforce system's unique role in strategic advising job seekers and employers places the system to demonstrate and catalyze this change and establishing efficiency for local and regional employers and their employees.