

Credit for Prior Learning (CPL)

Expanding Opportunity for Adult Learners

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Indiana Commission for Higher Education

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SESSION OVERVIEW

- **Why:** adult educational attainment in Indiana
- **What:** credit for prior learning as tool for serving adult learners
- **So What:** challenges and opportunities
- **Now What:** strategy and next steps



THE WHY

2 million
Adult learners in Indiana without a credential

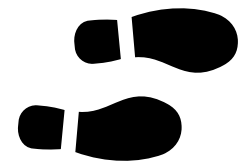
Nearly **40%** have some college, but no degree or credential

How can we help Hoosier adults further their education or training?

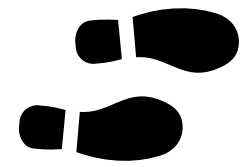
ADULT LEARNER (AGE 25+) GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Barrier removal underlying principle of promoting success

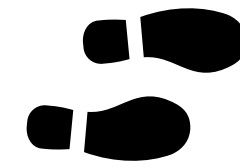
Interest &
Recruitment



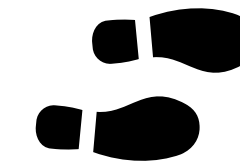
Admission &
Enrollment



Orientation



Credential
Completion



Transition
(education
workforce, other)

Potential Barriers

Cost (tuition & fees)
Lack strong campus connection
Lack of key information (advising)

Unpredictable schedules
Course difficulty/modality

Living expenses
Health/Family Emergencies
Change in Job/Employment Status

Support Principles

- Adaptivity
- **Credit for prior learning (work/life)**
- Financing
- Life & Career Planning

- Outreach
- Strategic Partnerships
- Student Support Systems

- Teaching Learning Process
- Technology
- Transitions



CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING (CPL) - EXPANDING OPPORTUNITY FOR ADULT LEARNERS

CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING (CPL) TOOL FOR SERVING ADULTS



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WHAT IS CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING (CPL)?

“Credit for prior learning (CPL) and prior learning assessment (PLA) credit are terms for the various methods that colleges, universities, and other education or training providers use to evaluate learning that has occurred outside of the traditional academic environment. CPL/PLA is typically used within postsecondary settings to grant college credit, certification, or advanced standing toward further education or training.” (CAEL/WICHE)

State financial aid definition: CPL/PLA “refers to an evaluation through which an eligible institution grants college credit for knowledge or skills learned outside the eligible institution...without requiring that a student 1) enroll in a course; or (2) pay the equivalent of full tuition and fees for an equivalent course.” (ICHE)

TYPES OF CPL CREDIT

Standardized Exams

(e.g., CLEP, DSST, UExcel)

Challenge or Departmental Exams

Military Training

Portfolio Assessment

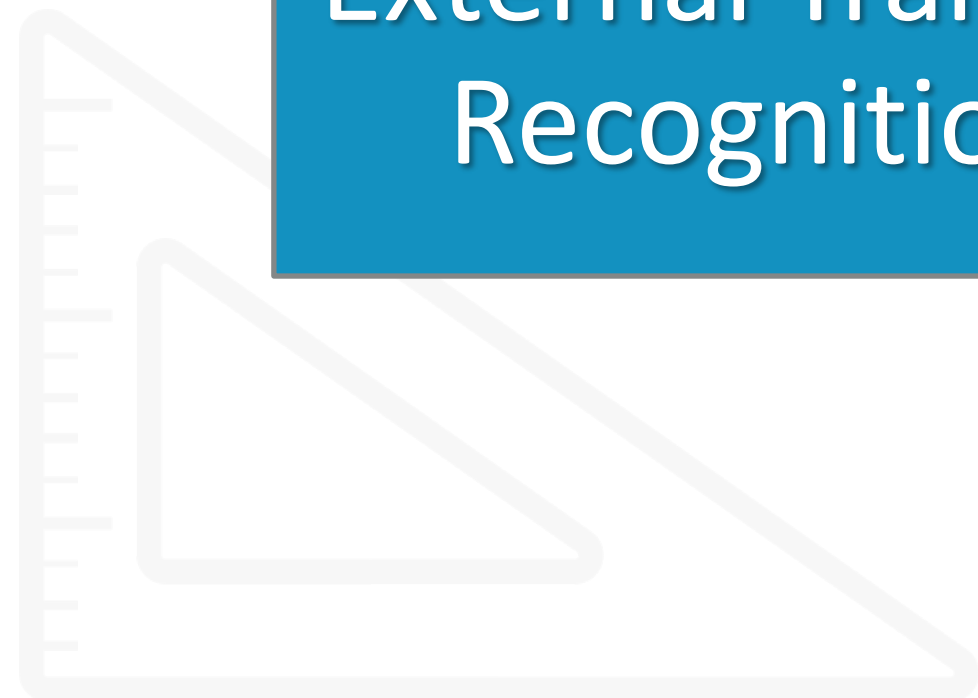
Corporate or External Training Recognition

Credentials, Licenses, and Certifications

Transfer Credit

Other

(e.g., AP and IB)



CURRENT STATE LEGISLATION AND POLICIES FOR CPL

Indiana House Bill 1549 (April 2021) - Clearinghouse

- ▶ Establishes the Indiana postsecondary CPL/PLA clearinghouse, a “consolidated inventory of learning assessments eligible for advanced standing or postsecondary credit awards at all state educational institutions.” References need for CPL data collection.

Indiana Code 21-42-72-2 - Credit for military service courses

- ▶ Requires each state educational institution to adopt a policy to award CPL/PLA credit to students with military training that meets the standards of the American Council on Education (ACE) as well as the state educational institution’s role, scope, and mission.

ICHE (2017) – Financial aid policy pertaining to CPL

- ▶ Establishes that state financial aid may be used to cover fees for CPL/PLA charged by the student’s current institution, specifically calls out examinations (e.g., CLEP) and portfolios.

IMPACT OF CPL: BETTER STUDENT OUTCOMES



National research suggests:

- ▶ **CPL Boosts Credential Completion Rates for Adult Learners**
 - 17% increase in completion rate; CPL students were more likely to complete college credentials than non-CPL students.
- ▶ **CPL Saves Adult Learners Time and Money**
 - \$1,500 to \$10,200 Estimated adult student savings through CPL, depending on sector.
 - 9 to 14 Months Estimated adult student time savings in earning degrees, with 12 or more CPL credits.
- ▶ **Institutions Also Benefit through Better Retention**
 - 17.6 Additional credits earned by students with CPL compared to non-CPL students.
- ▶ **Strong CPL-related outcomes true regardless of race, ethnicity, and income level.**
- ▶ **CPL is an underutilized tool and a focus on equity needs to be central to CPL policies and practices**
 - Only about 1 in 10 adult students (11%) received CPL credit.
 - Credit receipt rates were even lower for Black students and students from low-income backgrounds (6% and 7%, respectively).
 - Fewer than 1 in 20 adults (2%-4%) enrolled at two-year public institutions received CPL credit.

IMPACT OF CPL: BETTER STUDENT OUTCOMES

Higher credential completion for those who receive CPL/PLA credit:



Figure A. Adult students with PLA credits had higher overall credential completion, compared to adult students without PLA, from 2011-2012 academic year to end of 2018.

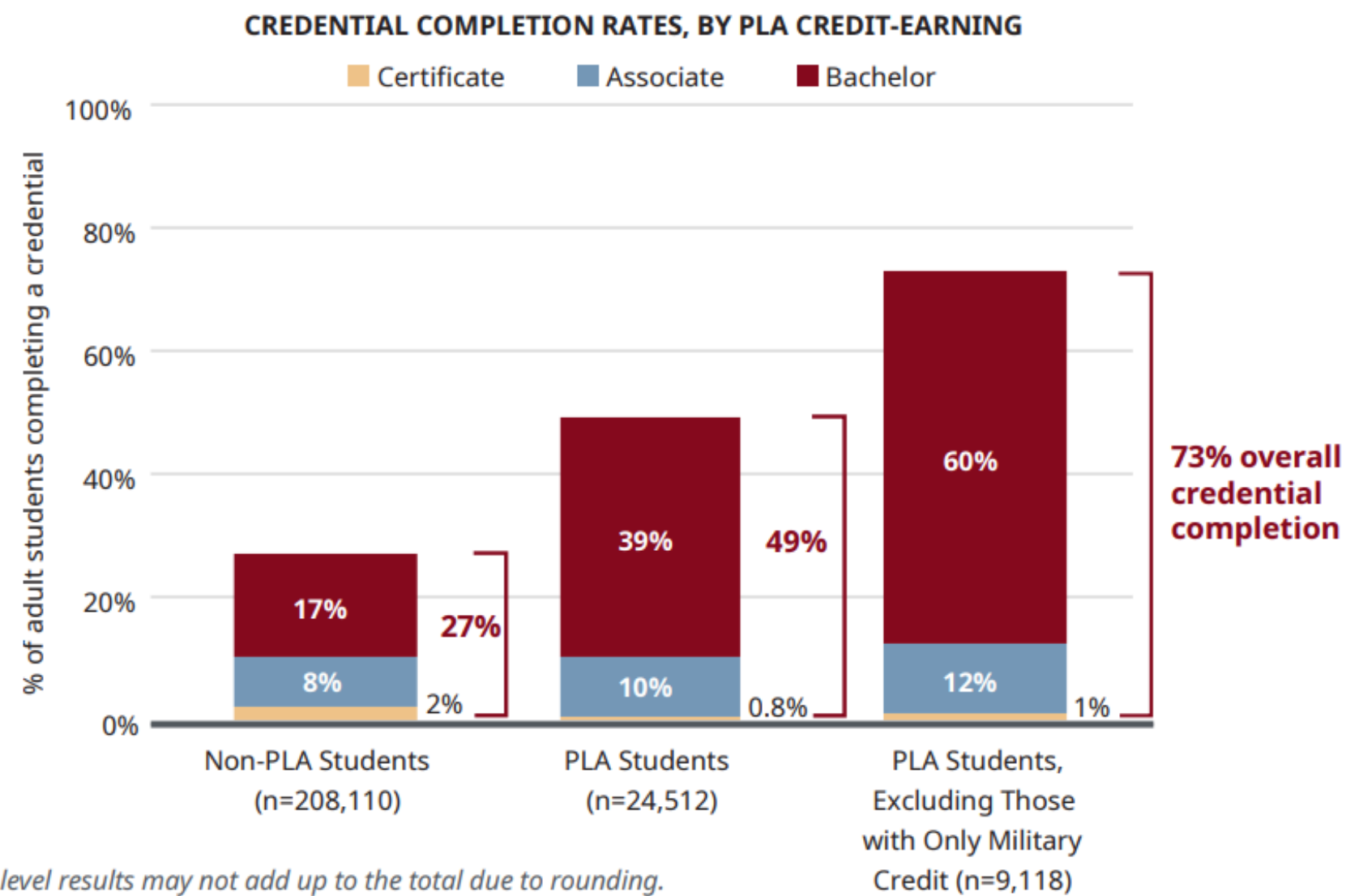
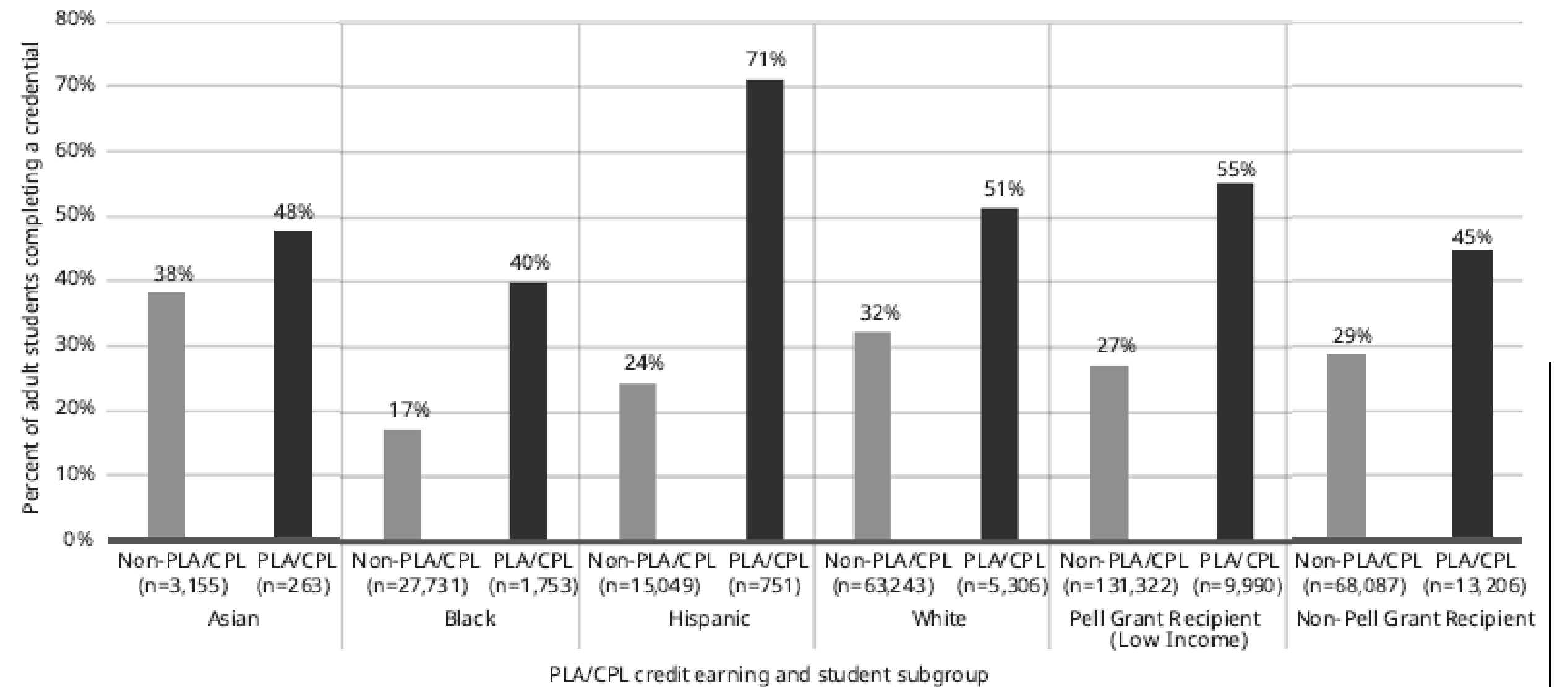


Figure 1. Hispanic, Asian, Black, and White adult students had higher overall credential completion with PLA/CPL credit compared to similar students without such credit; the same was true for adult Pell Grant recipients (lower-income students), compared to adult non-Pell Grant recipients.



CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING (CPL) - EXPANDING OPPORTUNITY FOR ADULT LEARNERS

CPL CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES



SOME CPL CHALLENGES

The Indiana Statewide CPL/PLA Taskforce and survey of Indiana public postsecondary institutions in fall 2020 highlighted:

- ▶ Lack of CPL program awareness
- ▶ Lack of access to information about CPL
- ▶ Lack of personnel to administer CPL
- ▶ Lack of access to CPL opportunities in field of study
- ▶ Need for consistent institution-wide policies and practices
- ▶ Need for increasing the number of students using CPL

SOME CPL BEST PRACTICES

Transparency

Promote awareness among staff, students, community partners of CPL policy, methods and availability

Affordability

Base fees (if any) on type of assessment, and ensure they are clearly published and available to student

CPL Credit Limitations and Transcription

Only count CPL credits toward credential (financial aid implications); record details on transcript

Transfer of CPL

Accept in transfer CPL credits awarded by other accredited institutions, as would other types of credit

Data / Evaluation

Ensure data systems link CPL credit to student demographics and outcomes; evaluate for access and effectiveness



“Employers are well positioned as effective messengers for encouraging Hoosiers to upskill/reskill and increase education attainment.”

The Chamber’s 2022 Employer Survey (922 responses) suggests many opportunities exist for higher education institutions to award CPL for employer-provided training and credentials in the form of an industry-recognized certification (38% surveyed), an employer-provided credential (20% surveyed), or other training (47% surveyed).

Employer Voice: Indiana Chamber of Commerce



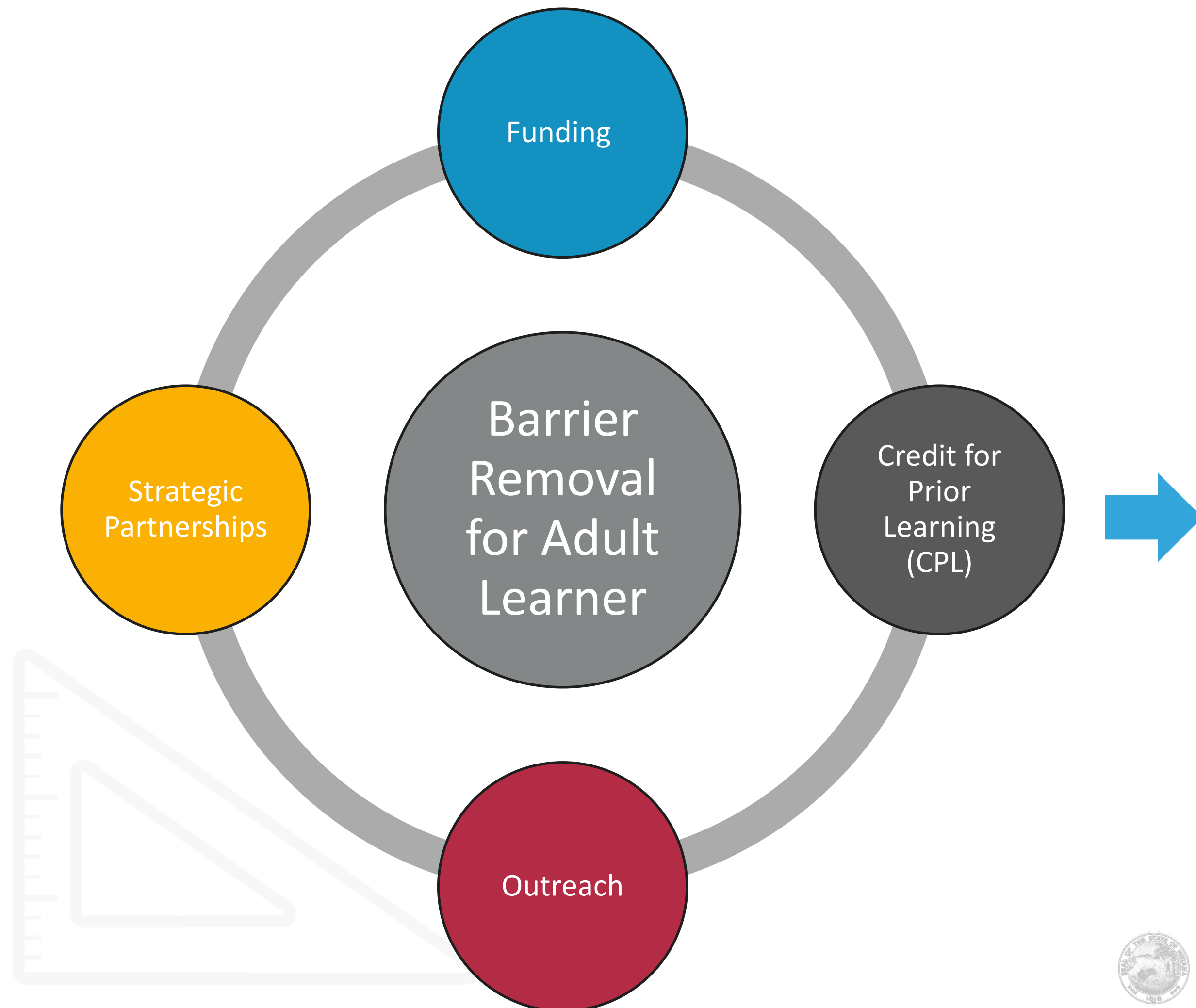
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NEXT STEPS WITH CPL



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ADULT STRATEGY FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION



CPL Focus Includes:

- ▶ Veterans Education Pathway Taskforce (*Feb 2023 launch*)
- ▶ CPL library (*Clearinghouse 2.0*)
- ▶ Statewide policy and digital toolkit development
- ▶ Data collection
- ▶ Employer engagement

BE A CPL CHAMPION – SOME RESOURCES

- ▶ Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) www.cael.org
 - The PLA Boost (Dec 2020) <https://www.wiche.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/PLA-Boost-Report-CAEL-WICHE-Revised-Dec-2020.pdf>
 - Equity Paradoxes in *The PLA Boost* (Oct 2021) <https://www.wiche.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/PLA-Equity-Report-CAEL-WICHE-October-2021.pdf>
- ▶ American Council on Education (ACE) www.acenet.edu
 - ACE National Guide <https://www.acenet.edu/National-Guide/Pages/default.aspx>
 - ACE Military Guide <https://www.acenet.edu/Programs-Services/Pages/Credit-Transcripts/Military-Guide-Online.aspx>
- ▶ CPL Clearinghouse (ICHE) <https://transferin.net/ways-to-earn-credit/credit-for-prior-learning-cpl-clearinghouse/>



The background of the slide features a large, faint, circular seal of the State of Indiana. The seal contains the text "SEAL OF THE STATE OF INDIANA" around the top and "1816" at the bottom. In the center of the seal is a landscape with a rising sun, a plow, and a sheaf of wheat, symbolizing agriculture and industry.

QUESTIONS?

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