



## AB104 Adult Education Block Grant - Three-Year Consortia Plan Update from AB86 Final Plan

### Section 1: Consortium Information

**1.1 Consortium Planning Grant Number:**

13-328-39

**1.2 Consortium Name:**

Palo Verde Adult Education Consortium

**1.3 Primary Contact Name:**

Lale Cilenti

**1.4 Primary Contact Email:**

lale.cilenti@paloverde.edu

### Section 2: Three-Year Plan Summary

Palo Verde Adult Education Consortium was created to serve the diverse needs of the adult learners in our community. Our mission is to strengthen adult education in the rural, remote regions of Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, anchored respectively by the communities of Blythe and Needles. The consortium consists of three voting members, Palo Verde College, Palo Verde Unified School District and Needles Unified School District, and a number of partner institutions including the continuing education schools in Blythe and Needles, two tribal entities, several state prisons served by the college, and numerous local city and county social service and business agencies.

By consolidating the individual efforts of the various institutions that serve these communities into a single entity, the Consortium plans on meeting the educational and career training needs of community members to provide a sustainable living for themselves and their families. We are dedicated to offering equal access to these services so that all residents of the community have an equal opportunity to succeed in their career and life aspirations.

Palo Verde Consortium has identified several strategies relating to integrating programs and creating seamless transitions:

- Align career pathways from the local high school career technical programs the community college and ensure there are stackable credential options for students transitioning from local high schools: Currently there is a partnership between the Palo Verde College Blythe Campus and Palo Verde Unified School District where students from PVUSD are bused to PVC for CTE courses. An immediate goal is to expand the availability of CTE programs to meet the needs of the Needles community. There is already an agreement between Palo Verde College Needles Center and Needles Unified School District to share the existing ROP facilities and equipment at Needles High School. This agreement will be updated to create a stronger partnership between the two Needles institutions. Under this agreement, Palo Verde College would provide CTE instructors

and Needles USD would provide space and equipment. Needles USD has lab space and equipment for wood, welding, culinary and automotive programs, but does not have faculty to teach these courses. Discussions have been initiated for PVC to use these facilities for adult learners for short-term CTE programs after school hours.

- Strengthen the current outreach efforts to local high schools in Palo Verde Unified School District and Needles Unified School District.
- Continue to increase public awareness of the CHOICE program which offers free tuition for one semester to high school students and to adults who have been out of school for two years. As part of this outreach, consortium members already encourage students to apply for financial aid, and many families have learned that they qualify for aid they did not know about.
- Further explore the possibility of offering CTE courses on a compressed schedule since the compressed schedule offers better retention and completion rates. Due to the unemployment in the area, students would have time to complete courses on a compressed schedule and be able to reenter the job market more quickly.

To date, several gaps in several key areas most beneficial to local adult learners have been identified. These include programs to strengthen elementary and secondary basic skills, English language skills, technological/digital competency, short-term programs in career and technical education for rapid entry or re-entry into the workforce, seamless transitional pathways from high school diploma/GED to post-secondary academic or career pathway programs with emphasis on access, success, persistence, retention and timely completion.

The current action plan developed by the Consortium specifically focuses on the lack of services for High School Equivalency (GED) Preparation and Testing, High School Diploma Courses, and Basic Literacy and Numeracy Courses. Palo Verde Community College Consortium has begun to address these gaps as follows:

- Both Palo Verde College and Needles Center have been approved as official testing sites to administer the GED. They have trained staff to administer the exams as well as the technology as space available for students to take the exams.
- Continuation schools in Needles USD and Palo Verde USD offer high school coursework for students up to age 19 (and slightly older for specific student populations). Palo Verde College does not feel able to develop high school courses for older adults at this time.
- Palo Verde College currently offers basic literacy and numeracy courses (ABE). Some of these courses are offered on a compressed schedule. Needles Center will offer Life Skills Reading and Life Skills Math courses once qualified instructors have been identified and hired.
- In order to provide more opportunities for adults to earn a High School Equivalency certificate, PVC will recruit and hire a coordinator to oversee a learning center and coordinate preparation and testing programs across the region. The learning center would provide students with the space, technology and resources to prepare for the GED. Students would be able to work at their own pace, but staff would be available to encourage students and answer questions.

The Palo Verde Adult Education Consortium has also identified key strategies to accelerate a student's progress toward his or her academic goals. Several programs have already been implemented or are in progress:

- Compressed basic skills courses: This past academic year Palo Verde College compressed the two lowest levels of below-transfer math classes into one course. The plans are in place for the next two levels of math classes. This will reduce the number of below transfer classes in math from four courses to two courses.
- ENG (42/59) Writing and Reading: Faculty who teach these two courses have collaborated to include instruction in both reading and writing taught together in these courses. Whichever course students enrolls in, they will receive integrated instruction in both reading and writing. Students are currently required to complete one of these two courses.
- Career Educational Planning: Counselors that can work with students to identify career goals and map out an educational plan to help them reach their goals will be identified and/or hired. To support counselors and students in setting, mapping and reaching career goals, Palo Verde College will implement 3SP (Student Success Support Plan) in the Fall of 2015. 3SP is an online self-service program that allows students to track their progress toward educational and career goals.
- Mentoring program/student persistence: Staff will follow the progress of basic skills students in their courses. If students miss class, staff will follow up with the students to discover reasons why they missed and encourage students to persist with class attendance and completion. This program will start in Fall 2015.

During three-year grant period the Consortium will dedicate the majority of its efforts to addressing these gaps by providing targeted opportunities to meet local and regional educational, economic and workforce needs; increase academic and digital literacy levels; minimize duplication of efforts among member and partner institutions for efficient use of funds; and coordinate the use of available facilities and increase instructional/administrative staff levels as needed to serve adult learners more effectively.

## **2.2 Provide updates and changes to your submitted AB 86 Final Plan regarding Objectives 1 and 2.**

### **2.2a Objective #1:**

The Palo Verde Adult Education Consortium currently offers limited adult education services throughout the regional area in the program areas targeted by AB104.

Programs in elementary and secondary skills, including those leading to a high school diploma or high school equivalency certificate. (Program Area 1)

At this time there are no services and programs in High School Diploma under Adult Education in the region. Additionally, there are no dedicated GED prep courses at Palo Verde College at this time. However, Palo Verde College offers two non-credit courses (reading/writing and math) categorized as Adult Basic Education as well as several credit courses in Elementary and Secondary Basic Skills in Math and English. There is an Adult Education Center at the Needles Unified District which primarily serves as a continuation school in HSD/GED/CAHSEE for its non-traditional students, and offers a very limited selection of programs in the areas of Adult Basic Skills, Twin Palms Continuation School in Blythe serves credit deficient high school students, pregnant minors, and other students with unique needs, and offers HSD, GED prep and GED

testing for students aged 16-19. No other GED prep courses have been identified outside of the state prisons and Native American Tribal regions within the Consortium service area.

Programs for immigrants in citizenship, ESL, and workforce preparation. (Program Area 2)

Currently the only service provider for immigrants in citizenship, ESL, and workforce preparation is Palo Verde College which offers four levels of English language skills for credit, and several non-credit Adult Basic Education skill courses addressing entry level English skills, ad basic vocational skills, as well as citizenship and conversational vocational Spanish classes.

Programs for entry/re-entry into the workforce, programs to develop educational skills to assist elementary and secondary school students, programs for short-term CTE training. (Program Areas 3, 4 and 6)

Palo Verde College is the primary provider of adult educational services in the areas of entry/reentry into the workforce, child development programs and career and technical education certificates and degrees. Currently the college offers classes in Business, Industrial Technology, Child Development, Public Safety and various Health and Science disciplines including Agriculture, Alcohol and Drug Studies, Certified Nursing Assistant/Vocational Nursing, Emergency Medical Technology and Phlebotomy, even though most of these are not designated as short-term training programs at this time.

Programs for adults with disabilities (Program Area 5)

There are no non-credit courses offered for adults within the Consortium's service area. The Palo Verde College Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSP&S) offers services to help students of all ages circumvent their functional limitations and become active, productive members of the college community. The program emphasizes independence and self-reliance while providing the support necessary for individuals to achieve their goals, and is open to any student who has a verifiable physical, psychological, or learning disability, either temporary or permanent, which causes one or more limitations on educational performance.

Programs offering pre-apprenticeship training (Program Area 7)

Currently there are no programs offering pre-apprenticeship training within the Consortium's service area.

**2.2b Objective #2:** An updated evaluation of *current needs* for adult education programs within the consortium's region.

Geographically, the Consortium service area covers 6,500 square miles. In 2010 the area population numbered 29,851. The estimate for 2014 was 30,042 but 7,811 individuals were accommodated inside the two state prisons west of Blythe. The population, including those incarcerated, is projected to become only 30,792 by 2019. The following table provides a snapshot of the area.

Regional Consortia	Poverty	No High School Diploma	Unemployment	English Language Learners	Adults with Disabilities	Citizenship	Literacy
Palo Verde CCD	18,229	9,199	5,058	14,120	3,436	4,850	5,387
<i>% of 2010 Population</i>	<i>53.7%</i>	<i>27.1%</i>	<i>14.9%</i>	<i>41.6%</i>	<i>10.1%</i>	<i>14.3%</i>	<i>15.9%</i>

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey and U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics- National Assessment on Adult Literacy.

In addition to the demographic profile of the Needles, Blythe and Desert Center region, the potential needs for adult education in the region was developed along with a survey of 150 employers in eastern San Bernardino and Riverside Counties. The following tables provide a breakdown of the industry sectors for the communities of Blythe and Needles, respectively:

Industry Sector	%	Industry Sector	%
Agriculture/Mining	9.7%	Agriculture/Mining	0.9%
Construction	2.5%	Construction	8.9%
Manufacturing	1.1%	Manufacturing	3.6%
Wholesale Trade	3.1%	Wholesale Trade	1.2%
Retail Trade	12.3%	Retail Trade	9.6%
Transportation/Utilities	5.2%	Transportation/Utilities	15.3%
Information	0.3%	Information	2.0%
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate	3.5%	Finance/Insurance/Real Estate	5.5%
Services	40.5%	Services	48.7%
Public Administration	21.9%	Public Administration	4.4%

The largest employers in the Blythe area are the two prisons, the farms, and services catering to recreational opportunities along the Colorado River. Needles, although smaller than Blythe, is in the California-Arizona-Nevada tristate region, a 72-mile strip along the Colorado River with a population over 130,000, not counting the snowbirds who locate temporarily to the region during winter months. The major employers in the area are the railroad, the casinos in Laughlin, several hospitals and associated medical services, municipalities and school districts, large retail establishments such as Target, Wal-Mart, and Sam’s Club and restaurants and grocery suppliers that serve local residents and visitors. The service sector is by far the largest employer of adults in the region.

Analysis of employer needs and the regional labor market, particularly in the context of opportunities for adult education in the region, resulted in the following key findings:

- Technological/digital competency
- Health Care and Social Assistance
- Communication skills
- High School Completion/Additional Formal Education

Census projections indicate that the largest increase in the permanent population of the area will be in the over 65 age group, while the 45-65 age group will decline, and the 18-20+ population will stay about the same. Based on these projections, surveys conducted, demographic information, and other data gathered and reviewed, the following are the most pressing needs of the communities that the Consortium serves:

Elementary and Secondary Basic Skills: A significant population of adults in the region (20-30%) have less than a high school diploma, which is a significant hindrance to gainful employment. Unfortunately, due to the limited availability of appropriate funding, no high school diploma programs are offered by Palo Verde College Consortium members. There is no doubt that the community will benefit greatly from funding. Based on survey results, in addition to basic literacy and numeracy skills, there is also an urgent need for programs which result in increased technological and digital competency, and strong communication skills. The grant will enable the development and expansion of such programs. In order to offer quality educational programs that lead to successful transition to higher levels of education and ultimately to gainful employment, the grant will be utilized to expand the support services students need to accomplish their goals. This expansion will include the opportunity to hire additional teaching and support staff. It will increase the availability of materials and resources such as books and access to computers with internet accessibility. There is a need to provide students with access to additional support in the form of academic and career counseling. Currently, some of the instructors act as academic counselors, guiding and advising students as they persist through the adult education programs. It is a priority in the regional area to provide GED preparation classes and have a local GED testing available at the PVC Blythe campus and at the PVC Needles Center. In addition to increasing high-school/GED completion rates, the grant will offer increased educational opportunities for the other significant portion of the local population who are either only high school graduates (30-35%) or have some college courses, but no degree (25-35%).

Short-term, high employment potential CTE programs: The largest employers in the Blythe area are the state prisons and health and retail establishments, while the residents of Needles have the opportunity to seek employment in the tristate region in the service sector in health, entertainment, recreation and retail establishments. While some of the professions, particularly in the professional health-care field, certainly require more extensive education or training, there are many entry-level jobs available to residents who can demonstrate skills obtained through short-term career and technical training programs. Currently Palo Verde College has a number of CTE programs which will be reviewed for suitability for adaptation. The Consortium plans to concentrate its efforts on streamlining its existing certificate programs for rapid entry into the workforce initially in the areas of trades such as automotive technology, construction, and welding, eventually developing programs to address needs in gaming, hospitality, culinary and HVAC. Palo Verde College will also adapt existing soft-skills training programs leading to entry-level health occupations, digital/technological competency and business services to the short-term educational model.

Programs for immigrants in citizenship, ESL, and workforce preparation: Within the Consortium service area 14% of the residents of Blythe (which includes the prisons) and less than 4% of Needles have reported they speak English less than “very well” at home. Recent cuts of funding over the last few years have left Adult Education programs with no options other than to limit the services and programs that were being provided to students, many of which are still in great need within the region. With appropriate funding, the Palo Verde Consortium would be able to reinstate previous services and programs as well as implement additional new services in the region. Based on statistics and surveys, the communities served by the main Palo Verde College campus and the school district in Blythe, have a much greater need to strengthen the skills of

non-English speaking residents in order to maximize their employment potential.

**2.3 Briefly describe what your regional consortium system will look like by the end of the 2017-18 program year in the areas listed below.**

**2.3a Placement of adults (including but not limited to older adults) seeking education and workforce services.**

As reported above, census projections indicate that the consortium service area will see an increase in the 65+ age group, while the 45-64 age group is predicted to decline. The locations of Blythe and Needles may offer an explanation for this, especially with respect to the increase in the senior population of the region. The location along the Colorado River, in a remote, rural region of California with its warm climate and relatively sedentary recreational opportunities of casinos and boating is attractive to the baby boomer generation which has reached (or is nearing) retirement age. The area's proximity to Southern California has already impacted the region with a steady stream of weekend and summer vacation visitors to the river and the casinos. While these visitors do not seek educational or workforce services, those among them who choose to move to the area after retirement will look for activities and educational opportunities designed to enhance their lives. In addition to Southern California transplants, the region will certainly also see an increase in the above 65 resident population of snowbirds from the northern states and Canada. Many if not most of these individuals are well-educated professionals who have the means to travel extensively and eventually relocate. The consortium needs to plan on providing challenging educational opportunities, activities, programs and courses to such residents, who will bring with them more spending power to the region. The added advantage of increasingly being a retirement haven for a diverse group of individuals is the enrichment of the pool of potential part-time teachers and instructors. Communities such as Blythe and Needles have a difficult time recruiting qualified individuals to supplement the needs of programs full-time faculty are unable to cover.

**2.3b Programs offering pre-apprenticeship training conducted in coordination with one or more apprenticeship programs approved by the Division of Apprenticeship Standards.**

Currently there are no apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship programs within the consortium service area. According to the California Division of Apprenticeship Standards, there are over 200 occupations in California which lead to apprenticeship opportunities. If the state continues to fund pre-apprenticeship grants during this period, the consortium will consider hiring a consultant to evaluate the possibility of obtaining such a grant at a future date. The region would benefit greatly from programs specifically targeted for Allied Health Care, given the concentration of hospitals and auxiliary medical facilities which serve the increasingly aging residents of the area, as well as meeting the healthcare needs of the projected influx of retirees and the current population of seasonal older residents. Other regional programs which would benefit the community and the employers are culinary and hospitality, firefighting, building trades, welding, and auto and boat mechanics. The consortium will review these opportunities in subsequent planning meetings.

**2.3c Programs for adults (including but not limited to older adults) that are primarily designed to develop knowledge and skills to assist elementary and secondary school**

### **children to succeed academically in school.**

Palo Verde College does not currently have an elementary or secondary education program. It does, however, have an early child development program. Given the aging baby boomer generation and the current and anticipated shortage of qualified teachers, the Consortium recognizes the importance of developing a program which meets the needs of the California public education system. Well-trained educators provide students with the knowledge they need to prepare for life and careers, from basic through advanced academic skills, social and other formative skills. One of the most significant gaps in the K-12 education system is the scarcity of teachers in the science, technology, education, and math (STEM) fields. According to a December press release from the Chancellor's office, California's demand for new math and science teachers in the next 10 years is expected to exceed 33,000, far surpassing the number of STEM teachers that the state is expected to produce. In addition, an estimated 51,500 openings for elementary school teachers and 31,100 jobs for secondary school teachers will occur statewide between 2010 and 2020. In addition to Math and Science, the Chancellor's office is targeting gaps in the availability of educational and training opportunities in software coding and programming, as well as in "soft skills" such as communications and teamwork.

There are several degree pathways to consider: Elementary and Middle School Associate of Arts degree which provides the foundation coursework to prepare for transfer to a UC or CSU program to seek certification for grades K-8 and an endorsement in a specific content area; Associate of Arts in Secondary Teacher Education with an emphasis in one or more major areas for those interested in teaching in a high school setting, prior to transferring to a 4-year institution to complete the core curriculum, college of education, and/or state certification requirements. The school districts in the consortium would also benefit greatly from these programs through students-teaching assignments, and future placement of local residents in positions when available. The elementary and secondary education program is a longer term project which the consortium can address after the first year.

Another facet of this program can be to train mentors and volunteers to assist teachers in the public schools districts. The projected increase in the 65+ population in the region, and the expected source of this increase (as detailed in section 2.3a) can be easily utilized to address this aspect of the program. It is expected that the increase in the retiree population will bring more educated people to the region who may be interested in staying actively involved in a professional endeavor. A mentorship program can be designed to create a symbiotic relationship between community residents and students.

### **2.3d Collection and availability of data.**

The Palo Verde Adult Education Consortium's (PVAEC) primary areas of focus are: to create pathways, systems alignment and articulation among Consortium participants; and, to implement approaches proven to accelerate a student's progress toward his or her academic or career goals. Each of these to focus areas are broken down into implementation strategies outlined within the Palo Verde Adult Education Consortium: June 2015 Regional Plan Update.



The PVAEC will rely on the existing student information systems currently utilized by Palo Verde Community College District, Palo Verde Unified School District, and Needles Unified School District, in order to track student enrollment, demographics, and performance. Data will be compared to inform progress towards meeting Consortium implementation strategies and targeted program outcomes. Data that will be collected by the Consortium members will include:

- completion of high school diplomas and recognized equivalents, completion of post-secondary certificates, degrees, or training programs;
- transfers from adult school to post-secondary;
- And, transfers from post-secondary noncredit to credit.

Consortium members are already accustomed to working in partnership with respect to dual enrollment, and have the available resources required to collect the data.

### **2.3e Qualifications of instructors (including common standards across entities).**

Instructors, whether or not employed through AEBG funding, will be held to the same standards applied to all instructors. For those instructors employed by Palo Verde Community College, teaching either credit, or noncredit, the Minimum Qualifications for Faculty and Administrators – 2014 guide will be applied in determining their qualifications. For those instructors employed by either the Palo Verde Unified School District, or the Needles Unified School District, requirements established by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing will be applied. Where applicable, the Consortium members will require that instructors meet industry expectations with respect to those certifications required in order for students to sit for examinations.

## Consortium Member Signature Block

Name:

Sean Hancock, Vice President of Instruction and Student Services

Consortia Member:

Palo Verde College

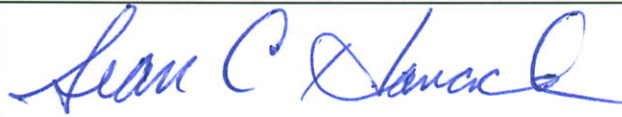
Email:

sean.hancock@paloverde.edu

Date:

October 20, 2015

Signature Box:



Name:

Mary McNeil, Superintendent

Consortia Member:

Needles Unified School District

Email:

Mary\_McNeil@needlesusd.org

Date:

October 14, 2015

Signature Box:



Name:

Brandy Cox, Principal PVHS

Consortia Member:

Palo Verde Unified School District

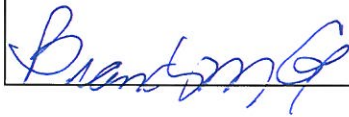
Email:

bcox@pvusd.us

Date:

10/8/2015

Signature Box:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brandy Cox", is written inside a rectangular box.