

### **III. Educational Section**

#### **A. Overview of the College**

The College is located in the agricultural Palo Verde Valley of southeastern California.

Palo Verde College opened as part of the Palo Verde Unified School District in 1947 to fewer than 20 students. At that time the District was using a former Army Air Corps training base, Morton Air Academy, located six miles from the center of Blythe. In 1950 the College enrollment had become 150 students and by the end of that decade the College moved to a Spanish-style building on East Hobsonway that had been a former high school. With almost 500 students the College relocated in 1967 to a new campus adjacent to the high school at the corner of Lovekin Blvd. and Chanslorway. The College District was created in 1973 with its own five-member Board of Trustees when it separated from the Palo Verde Unified School District as the curriculum expanded to include vocational-technical, continuing education, and developmental courses.

By 1999 the district expanded to include the eastern part of San Bernardino County and the City of Needles and added two additional trustees to represent the San Bernardino County territory. Instruction in Needles started at the high school campus but today the state-recognized Needles Educational Center operates from the historic Claypool Building that opened in June 2009.

In 2001 the main campus moved to its new location, a 200-acre campus on the mesa overlooking the City of Blythe. That same year the College began a partnership with the Chuckawalla and Ironwood State Prisons to offer correspondence courses to the incarcerated students. The correspondence program has grown to reach students at twenty-five other state Department of Corrections facilities. In fall 2007 the College opened the Technology Building, in 2008 the Physical Education Complex, and in 2012 the Fine and Performing Arts complex was opened on the main campus.

The College is in the process of recovering from a major financial crisis that came to light in mid-2011. As a result, the College reduced staffing through voluntary separations, re-organized functions and responsibilities, cut expenses, and instituted more effective and transparent financial management practices.