Sylvie Hale: Hello. I'm Sylvie Hale. This is the third webinar in a series of three developed to provide information to school districts about the K-12 component of the Strong Workforce program and the requests for applications. This webinar focuses on how to write a strong application. We want you to be successful, so the purpose of this webinar is to review the application and provide tips and examples for how to complete each of the sections with an eye to the outstanding criteria of the scoring rubric.

We recognize that you have experience writing grants, so this webinar focuses on the specifics of this particular application, not general grant writing strategies. To make the most of this webinar, we suggest you have the RFA instructions and the corresponding scoring rubric handy.

This webinar will provide guidance on one, overall writing tips for this RFA. Two, how to incorporate materials provided in the previous two webinars. Three, tips on getting to outstanding in the scoring rubric. Note that the content of this webinar is based on the best information available at the time of this recording. Please check with the Chancellor's office if you have any questions or need further clarification.

In this webinar we will cover elements of an outstanding application, both process and quality, and provide section by section examples. All materials mentioned in this webinar, including this PowerPoint are available in the links provided here. You can also access the materials using the links embedded in the description below. In addition, we encourage you to submit questions related to the RFA directly to the Chancellor's office at the email provided. Region specific questions may be submitted through the Google form. Responses will be provided within 48-hours.

Before we get into the specifics of the application, we want to highlight a few overarching process elements. Specifically, collect supporting materials, ideas, and source material such as district goals, the CTEIG plan, and your LCAP. Especially important is your LCAP, alignment to this application with the LCAP is critical.

Next, convene individuals including writers, and thought partners, and representatives from partner organizations. Third, confer with your team and partners as you review the RFA and corresponding scoring Rubric. Become familiar with what is required and ensure common understanding. Submit questions early in the process to ensure you receive a response in time to inform your application development.

Fourth, connect the various components of the application into a coherent Pathway Improvement Plan, specifically, align the needs section with the target population you identify and the specific strategies and activities you develop. These are contained in sections four, five, six, and seven of the application. These sections will be covered in greater detail later in this webinar.

Next, draft the various sections offline, using Word, Google Docs, or other similar software. Working offline allows you to look at the big picture and ensure coherence of the overall plan. This will also facilitate your planning process and prepare you to complete the online application.

Lastly, repeat. Make this an iterative process, working closely with your partners to refine the overall plan and the details of each section. Additionally, once you're ready to submit, check the character length limits for the various sections of the online form against your offline text, so you can edit it down if needed before you start entering it into Nova. If you have additional information or details you would like to include in your application, consider uploading additional documentation in the resources section of Nova.

A foundational point in your process is to identify your priorities. Therefore, we recommend the following. First, establish your focus, collect information about regional goals, industry sector priorities, and areas of focus. This information was the subject of webinar number one, so if you haven't watched webinar one, we recommend you start there.

Next, zero in. Use labor market data to identify specific industries or occupations as appropriate. Webinar two provides a wealth of information about where to find the data and how to include it in your planning and application. Next, examine statue, review your current programs and pathways to determine gaps or needed revision. More on this subject a little later in the webinar. Lastly, identify student needs and determine if you are serving those needs. Working through these steps will inform the development of your plan, in particular your strategies and activities. These sets of steps are also iterative, so repeat these as needed. We will cover more details a little later in this webinar.

In addition, to the process recommendations we just covered, there are several additional quality considerations to keep in mind for an outstanding application. Specifically, completeness, be sure that all sections are complete and all fields in the online form are addressed. Thoroughness. Provide adequate detail in each section by addressing all components of the related scoring rubric. Coherence. As mentioned earlier, your Pathway Improvement Plan needs to articulate clearly how the regional goals, areas of focus, needs, target populations, strategies and activities all need to fit together. Lastly, leveraging. Demonstrate how your plan builds on other initiatives and leverages resources. We also suggest you review page 13 of the RFA for additional positive considerations to guide your focus and strengthen your plan.

Now, let's get into the specifics of the application. The rest of this webinar will cover each section of the application and for each we highlight the related scoring rubric information and what constitutes an outstanding rating. Then, we provide tips and examples.

Section one, Pathway Improvement Summary. This section is not scored and it is pre-populated by information that was submitted through the letter of intent. This includes name, region, and scope. Note that the pre-populated information can be edited. We recognize that you've probably been working on your application since you submitted the LOI. Be sure to update the summary accordingly. Also in this section, be sure to include assurances that you have aligned your plan to the LCAP. The summary might describe a single application to address the development of a single pathway in a single industry at one high school, such as engineering at Poway High School, for example.

A single application might also address that development of several pathways in a single industry sector at multiple high schools, such as manufacturing and product development at several high schools to respond to workforce needs of the growing manufacturing industry in the region, and foster collaboration among the high schools. You might also consider several applications to address several focus areas such as middle school career development, high school career development, or high school pathway development.

Next section is Lead and Partner Agencies. This section is also not scored, but at least one community college or community college district must be included as a partner agency in the application. There are 10 colleges within six community college districts in the region. For a complete list, together with their geographic location and CTE pathways offered, visit the regional website at careered.org.

Note that partner agencies provide financial and in-kind matches and while not required, you may upload a written plan, agreements, or letters of support as evidence of partnership as part of your application. We recommend a deliberate, collaborative model that includes leadership from both community colleges and districts, frequent communication and meetings are needed. A shared leadership model is desired. We also encourage you to look at the FAQ's posted by the Chancellor's office for guidance on working with community colleges.

There are several collaboration options, but they all need to be real collaborations. The goal of this funding is to increase the transition from secondary to post-secondary. A couple of examples include: a district may collaborate with its local community college to engage college and high school counselors to work together to support student career guidance and transitions, or to address a specific labor market need, a district may collaborate with a college with a particular pathway, such as manufacturing to increase transition between secondary to post-secondary in that sector.

The third section is Collaborative Partners. Section three is worth five points. Each rubric section is copied here verbatim, but formatted differently to highlight the component parts within the rubric description to better highlight what is required. A score of outstanding for this particular section means an application contains extensive and/or varied partnership that integrate and leverage available partner resources in the region including a thorough description of roles and how the partnership will make a difference for student outcomes.

Outstanding also includes a well-articulated plan for how matching resources from collaborative partners will be used and leveraged in the Pathway Improvement. It's important to note that collaborative partnerships are different from partner agencies described in section two. Collaborative partnerships are not required and partnership agencies are. However, we encourage you to include collaborative partnerships in your application.

Some examples of some types of collaborative partners include: business and industry entities, for example General Dynamics, communication and philanthropic organizations such as Girls, Inc., and local workforce development boards such as the San Diego Workforce Partnership. Consider these collaborative partnerships as a way to augment your capacity to deliver services to your students. For example, a local hospital may be engaged to provide work-based learning opportunities for students or a local union may facilitate apprenticeships. Collaborative partners bring their own resources to the table in the form of financial or in-kind contributions.

Now, to guide you through the rest of the application, let me introduce my colleague, Svetlana Darche.

Svetlana: Thank you Sylvie. I'm going to focus now on sections four through eleven, with a particular focus on sections four through eight. We'll start with the Statement of Need.

Statement of Need is worth 10 points. We'll spend a few slides on this section, even though it's not as large as some of the others, because it undergirds all of the other sections of the plan. An outstanding Statement of Need includes a thorough and convincing rationale of why you're selecting sectors and pathways, supported by economic data and labor market information provided by the Center of Excellence or the CDE. You'll want to explain the status of current CTE courses, the necessity to support those programs, and how your plan will address regional economic needs.

There are four kinds of need, essentially reflected in this RFA. Labor market demand, which means the growing demands for workers in key industries. Lack of pathways, which are areas where assessment of your current status reveals that more pathways are needed in selected industries. Improvement needed to existing pathways, this is where your current status analysis revealed that existing pathways and programs need some improvements. The fourth area of need is student needs. This is not an explicit bullet in the RFA, but we wanted to highlight it, because throughout the proposal the needs of underserved students need to be considered. The RFA specifically calls out schools that have high drop out levels and serving underserved and underrepresented students.

Let's unpack this section. The first type of need is labor market demand in high wage industries. To describe labor market demand in high wage industries, you want to look at the demand in specific industries and occupations with high wages. An example is advanced manufacturing. Advanced manufacturing represents 15% of all employment in San Diego County and 22% of annual payroll in San Diego County. Employers are also looking for specific skills, both technical and soft skills. An example of soft skills would be team work, which can be developed through project-based and work-based learning strategies.

One area that you might explore is manufacturing and product development. In addition to there being high labor market demand in this high wage area, there are also a large number of programs in the local community colleges. Though few at the high schools, this would present an opportunity to build pathways at the high school level in this area. In some cases, an LEA may want to create a pathway that does not exist at their local college. Please see the frequently asked questions' guidance on this. In most cases there will be a college that has the courses that you're interested in developing.

Let's recap some steps for building new pathways. First of all, look at the pathways you already have or may not have. Look at the labor market information on high wage, in demand jobs, look at the offings at your local college, compare labor market needs to offerings at the college, talk to your college partner about promising areas of expansion, decide together and commit to work together on these pathways.

Now, we want to talk about improving existing pathways and programs. Here are a few tips for strengthening existing pathways and programs: Use the career and pathway development rubric that you learned about in webinar one to assess the strength of your pathways in each domain; teaching and learning, structure, and culture and beliefs. You can also use the middle school and high school career development continuum tools to further examine your program components. Finally, review your high quality CTE rubric that you used for your CTEIG application to cross check areas of need and consider strategies that would leverage your CTEIG grant.

Here are some ways to strengthen your existing pathways and programs. If you determine that your existing pathways and programs lack key components, you need to build those out, be strategic in those you choose, and work with your school staff, administrators, and partners to do this. You may find that existing program components don't meet best practice standards. In this case, you want to examine your programs carefully, improve them, provide professional development if that's appropriate, and seek support. With regard to accessibility, take a look at your demographic data to see if all existing or proposed pathways provide equitable access.

I want to take a moment to explore a few barriers to access. I'll review these in the form of questions. Do parents understand these programs? Is the information readily available in multiple languages? Are students introduced to the options over time and not just in a single event? Do pathways with challenging curriculum, such as STEM pathways receive adequate and friendly marketing, such as peer-to-peer outreach, so that all students feel welcome to join them? Is preparation offered before students select pathways, so that they're warmed up and ready to succeed? If pathways in various industries are distributed across your district, do students and parents have transportation? Are accommodations available for students with disabilities?

Regarding pathway elements like work-based learning, do grades, other policies, transportation, timing, clothing, or other logistics pose barriers to students who could benefit from these experiences? Finally, is academic support available to help struggling students stay motivated and succeed in rigorous pathways? Finally, we want to talk about student-centered needs. Again, this is a segue way to the next section, but we wanted to mention that you need to pay attention to demographics of your community, drop out rates at your schools, and other student and family needs.

The next section is called Target Pupil, or target populations. This section has a maximum of 10 points. I'll quickly review the rubric description. The RFA calls for a thorough description of the challenge that your LEA is trying to solve, how the proposed strategy will address the challenge, how the proposed strategy will serve traditionally underserved and under-represented students, and finally a thorough articulation of how the LEA designated funding in it LCAP target priorities of student subgroups, and how the application is aligned to this LCAP.

Here are some strategies to address your students' needs. These are only examples, there are many ways to do this. Look at the drop out rates by grade bands to see if there are high rates of drop out between middle school and high school, or during the 9th grade. Address the needs across race or ethnicity, disability status, academic achievement, and other risk factors. You may also want to consider gender by industry, which is really important when trying to encourage girls to enter STEM fields. Review your LCAP to see where it targets student subgroups and how the Strong Workforce Program grant can align and complement or augment resources for existing priorities. Then link your strategy to the drop out rate for 9th graders.

Section six is called Pathway Improvement Strategies. This is a really important section of your proposal. It's worth up to 25 points. The RFA requires you to provide a thorough and convincing description that demonstrates that the application is informed by, aligned with, and expands upon the goals and priorities outlined in the regional plan for your region. In this case, you want to take a look at the goals and priority sectors that were described in webinar one. The RFA also calls for a thorough articulation of how the proposed strategy addresses your statement of need. Finally, you need a thorough description for each pathway improvement strategy.

In this slide, we provide a couple of examples of strategies. You'll need to craft these strategies, obviously to meet the needs in your own LEA. Strategy one, expand work-based learning opportunities to high school students associated with the Computer Science pathway at Central Union High School in Imperial Valley, where the free and reduced lunch rate is about 77%, expand opportunities to the local continuation high school in year two. Another example might be, expand career exploration and guidance to all Central Union High School students with active engagement of parents in a community where approximately 25% of the students are English learners. As you embellish on this strategy, you'll want to describe how you will be engaging parents in multiple languages, for example.You need to explain each strategy thoroughly in relation to the goals, the focus areas, which are again, middle school and high school career development, and high school pathway development, and in relation to your labor market needs. You want to provide detail about each strategy as required in the RFA.

The Statement of Work, is the next large section of the proposal. This section is worth up to 25 points. The RFA requires you to provide a thorough and convincing description of the activities that you're proposing and how they will address your statement of need. You'll provide a thorough articulation of the performance outcomes timeline and responsible persons for each activity and thorough and convincing evidence that the proposed activities will help build the course pathway.

Here are just a couple of tips. Each activity is associated with a strategy, you'll want to document each activity as implemented in the strategies that you described in the prior section. Then, for each activity, you'll add the K12 metrics, the performance outcomes, the timeline, and the responsible persons. Here are a couple of examples. In the example at Central Union High School, two activities are featured: work-based learning in strategy one and career exploration and guidance in strategy two. Each one of these activities would require a K12 metric, performance outcomes, timeline, and responsible persons.

Section eight is Capability and Sustainability. This section is worth up to 15 points. The RFA requires thorough and well articulated plan for management and clear articulation of roles and responsibilities for the lead LEA and partners, extensive experience administering and managing state-funded projects and collaboration with multiple stakeholders, and thorough and convincing articulation of how you will utilize the existing programs, partnerships, and resources to create sustainable pathway improvements.

For this section, we only have a couple of tips. The first and most important one is to respond to each of the prompts in the RFA. There are nine of them. For capability, make sure that the responsibilities and organizational structures reflect shared leadership with partners. Don't just insert the organizational chart from your school district. Be sure to include where your partners, whether they're college partners or business partners, will fit into your decision making structure. Demonstrate experience and rigor in management and oversight. List your past projects, describe your management and oversight processes, regular meetings, reporting structures, and so forth. For sustainability, be specific in describing how you will leverage existing programs and resources, such as Perkins, your California Partnership Academy funding, your CTEIG funding, your LCAP, and so forth.

The ninth section is your Pathway Improvement Budget. This section is up to 10 points. You need to provide a thorough and convincing indication that you'll commit matching funds as described in the request for applications. You'll also need to provide a thorough articulation of how the grant funds will be distributed based on a 30-month spending period.

Here are just two very simple tips. Make sure you're very clear about the matching requirements and review the RFA and the frequently asked questions thoroughly, and follow-up with any additional questions to the Chancellor's office as needed.

Section 10 is Supporting Documents. The supporting documents section is not scored. Uploading documents is optional, but we recommend that you do so to provide evidence, and demonstrate the authenticity of your partnerships, and the coherence of your plan. For example, you'll want to provide agreements and MOUs with partners, letters of commitment and support, labor market information, economic data, match documentation, organization charts, and resumes. We suggest that you review the RFA for more detail.

The very last section is Preview and Submit. See your RFA for details on how to submit your proposal, and don't forget to take the time to celebrate your accomplishment.

For additional resources and if you have any questions, you can access this PowerPoint and related materials in the link provided. You should provide any RFA related questions to the Chancellor's office at the email provided here. If you have any region specific questions, feel free to use the Google form that is listed in this slide.

Thank you so much, and good luck to all of you.