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## PATH FORWARD – EXISTING AND ONGOING ACTIVITIES

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**Attachment(s):** None

**PowerPoint(s):** PowerPoint 1 – Path Forward Org Change Management Return to the Office Activities

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### **BACKGROUND - BUILDING FROM A FOUNDATION:**



CalSTRS continues to be an organization committed to providing exceptional service to our members while also holding true to its core values and culture – fostering a supportive environment for staff and leaders as they navigate a blended work environment.

There have been transition milestones and successes to note as the organization prepares its staff to return to the office including:

**Health and Safety:** All high touch areas, including those in the core area, are cleaned five times daily with enhanced cleaning following CDC guidelines. Eighty eight percent of the organization has verified their vaccination status.

**Technology:** Laptops, collaborative tools such as MS Teams, Zoom, OneDrive, and SharePoint provided our quick response to working from home. Recently launched was WebEx softphones that replaces physical desk phones while keeping the same functionalities and starting in April, ServiceNow, a portal that allows for employee workstation scheduling will be available. It gives users the ability to reserve desks located in shared workspaces and conference rooms.

**Information Security:** Mandatory network password changes for all staff happen their first day working onsite. Also, the annual mandatory security awareness and enterprise data management training was completed by staff across all parts of the organization in the virtual environment.

**Investments, Space Planning:** Prior to the beginning of the pandemic, Investments had reached maximum space capacity relative to the existing floor plate allocation. Since CalSTRS began working remotely, more than two years ago, Investments has grown by an additional 37 authorized positions. Absent any solutions, Investments would have experienced a space deficit of nearly 60 workstations, based on authorized positions, prior to the completion of the Headquarters Expansion. To temporarily accommodate the growing staff within Investments, various space enhancement strategies were implemented. These included desk sharing arrangements, minor workspace modifications, hotel workstations, and the acquisition of

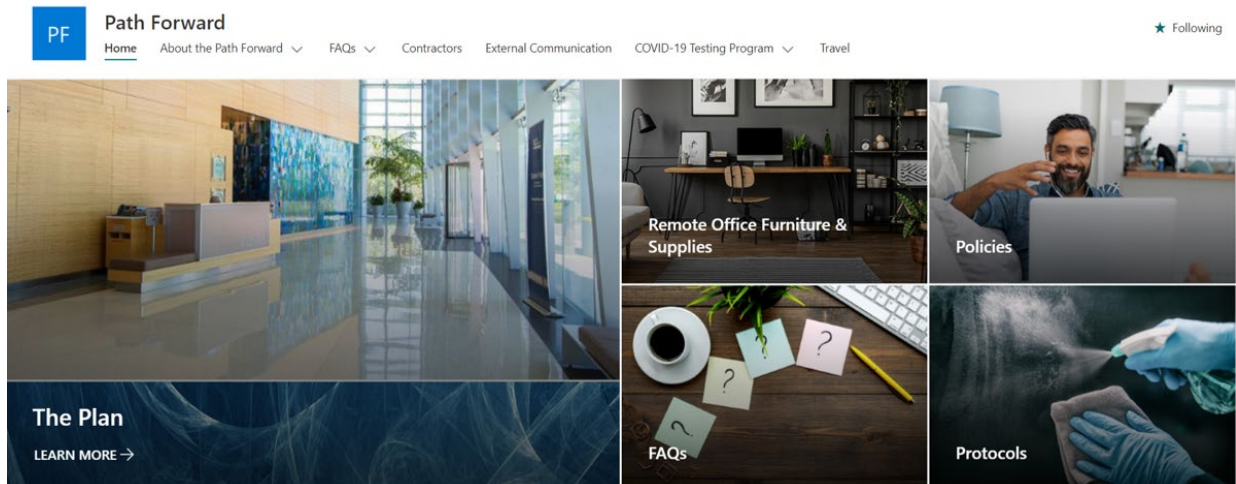
additional space on floors 12 and 15. Together these space strategies have enabled Investments to return to work in a safe and collaborative physical environment.

**Investments, Hybrid Technology Enhancements:** Investments has partnered with Technology Services to ensure that each workstation is prepared for a hybrid work environment. In addition to ensuring adequate workspace equipment needs, the branch has added enhancements such as additional web cameras, the implementation of collaboration software, like Teams and soft-phones, and additional conference room technology. With the increased risk of cyber-attacks, Investments has implemented single sign-on to investment software where possible and participate in the Enterprise cyber security program, reviewing results regularly and providing additional follow up where needed. In the coming months, the branch will continue to work closely with Technology Services to assess additional collaboration tools to successfully implement hybrid meetings and communication. Investments will continue its efforts to ensure staff feel connected, both at home and in the office, making certain productivity remains high and the hybrid work environment does not hinder efficiency or negatively impact the Investments Branch culture.

**RETURN TO OFFICE ORG-WIDE APPROACH:**

As the organization prepares for staff’s return to office, activities will be offered enterprise-wide to promote the well-being and engagement of all staff during this transition. Intentional planning and thoughtful consideration was given to design activities around the guidance of existing CalSTRS policies, procedures and protocols.

Building upon the foundation of the Path Forward Taskforce and its cross-functional teams, activities were planned to align with the following Guiding Principles:



**Staff Health and Wellbeing**

- Recognize and support the unique personal circumstances of our diverse staff.

## Organizational Health and Continuity

- Preserve CalSTRS culture as we adapt to different work environments, recognizing it as an important competitive advantage.

## Sustained Path Forward

- Take a steady and thoughtful approach when bringing more staff to work onsite.
- Foster a high level of employee engagement and communication.

With our organizational mission at the forefront, in addition to the Guiding Principles listed above, Human Resources collaborated with other business area stakeholders to implement activities that support the human behavior and emotional responses that occur in significant transitions or change – in this case, returning to work in the office in a new blended environment.

## THREE AREAS OF FOCUS:

CalSTRS intends on supporting the engagement and well-being of all staff in this enterprise-wide transition by focusing on three areas that are critical to sustaining our organizational health:



**CULTURE**



**WELLNESS**



**DE&I**

### The Goal:

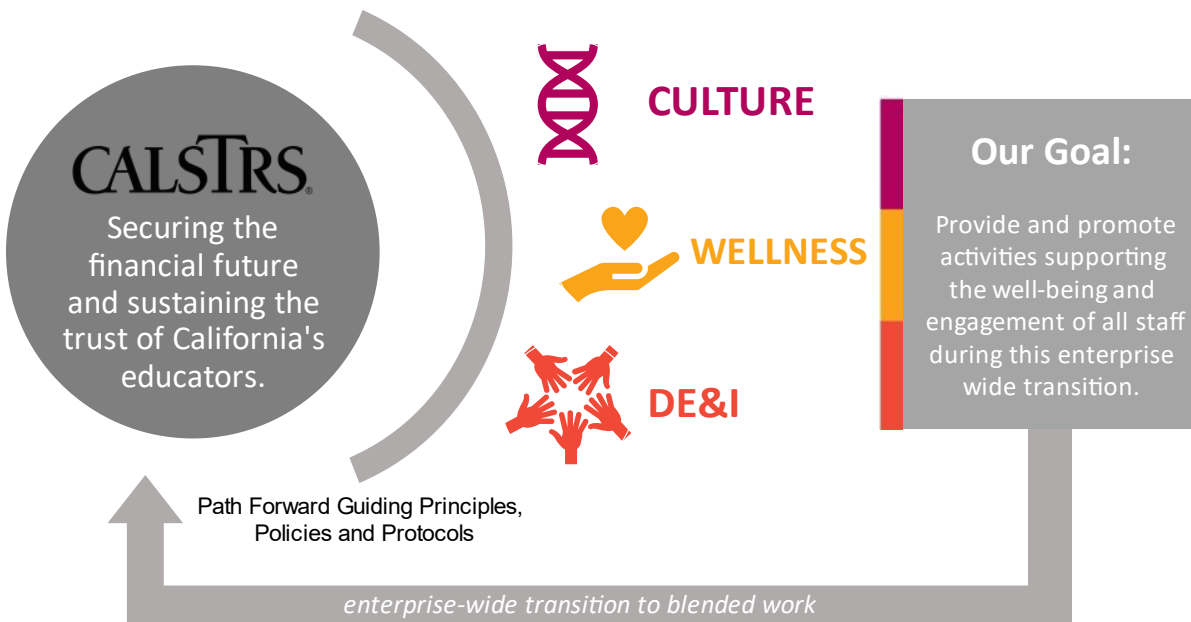
Provide and promote activities supporting the well-being and engagement of all staff during this enterprise-wide transition.



The intent is to foster a welcoming, supportive environment for all staff and leaders as they return to the office. The overall goal of the planned activities is to promote and support the well-being and engagement of all employees so they can best accomplish the organization’s mission to serve our members in this enterprise-wide transition toward blended work.

**OUR CHANGE FRAMEWORK:**

A service-driven and people-focused change framework was developed with the goal of re-engaging employees in a blended work environment while prioritizing the CalSTRS mission.



**PLANNED ACTIVITIES:**

To execute our change framework, the following activities have been planned to welcome and support staff in their return to the office between now and the end of the fiscal year:

**Welcome and Recharge Station:**

Visible lobby setup the week of April 4-8 where employees can go to get information and resources to successfully return onsite to work. Resources and support will be available to all staff, with special consideration for:

- New staff – in-person welcomes and answers to navigating the CalSTRS campus.
- Essential workers – appreciation for their great work these past two years and resources to transition to work with more people coming into the office.
- Returning staff – welcome and re-acquaint to the CalSTRS campus, support to transition to working onsite after two years.

Executives and senior leadership will be present each morning to welcome staff. Café menu items will be featured to introduce staff to the café and their offerings. Wellness opportunities and resources will be highlighted to support well-being of all staff as they navigate their transition back to the building as best as possible.

### **Staying Connected sessions:**

Staying Connected sessions were introduced two years ago in the virtual environment as a way for staff to stay connected through informal topical discussion among staff across the organization. As staff continues to navigate the transition to a blended work environment, the reemergence of social activities for staff will help build relationships and maintain engagement across the organization.

### **Leadership Connect sessions:**

Leadership Connect Sessions offer leaders the opportunity to connect and engage with their peers through informal dialogue. The purpose of these sessions is to provide support to leaders through the transition to a blended work environment and to provide a space for leaders to meet with their peers across branches and divisions.

Each facilitated session is 1-hour in length and will begin with a few thought-provoking questions. The session will allow for a time of deeper discussion in smaller groups.

### **Virtual Calm Room:**

[Breathe. Relax. Recharge.](#)

Read a message from the Wellness Team and learn how to use this site as a resource to support your well-being.

Explore as little or as much as you'd like. Come back as often as you need.

TIP: For the best user experience, use Chrome when visiting this site. If a link displays as "not available" or "your browser cannot play this video" please check back later.

#### Sounds and Music

Relax, Focus, Be Inspired



#### Visual Relaxation

Immerse Yourself in Nature



#### Live Animal Cameras

Cuteness Overload



The new virtual Calm Room is a resource designed to support employee's well-being. The site provides opportunities to experience virtual nature walks and museum visits, brainy game challenges, movement and relaxation activities. Staff are encouraged to take a few minutes during their free time to relax and recharge. Research shows taking a break and practicing self-care supports well-being, balances emotions and builds resilience.

**Wellness Challenges:**

Healthier U Connections - Encourages employees to join the Healthier U Connections wellness platform which includes wellness challenges like the “Build a Healthy Kitchen Challenge” for new healthy recipes.

Lunchtime walking groups will also be coordinated for staff who would like to join others outdoors for walks during their breaks or lunch.

**Diversity & Inclusion activities:**

*Who Are You?*

The “Who Are You?” activity will help participants get to know each other on a more genuine and authentic level. CalSTRS staff can join their colleagues across the organization for a lighthearted 30-min activity and learn more about each other by asking one simple question: Who Are You? This popular activity is adapted from CalSTRS’ Diversity & Inclusion training.

*This or That*

The “This or That” activity is a fun way for participants to get to know each other better and see how similar or different CalSTRS staff are from one another. Staff are encouraged to join their fellow colleagues across the organization for a 30-minute session to engage with each other and meet someone new or reconnect with old colleague.

**AN ONGOING, ADAPTIVE EFFORT:**

CalSTRS is about to embark on a new journey in its organizational development as staff return to the office and take the first steps toward working in an innovative blended environment. We recognize how critical it is to evaluate and adapt our ongoing efforts in this uncharted territory.



We will leverage the successes made these past two years to continue to be adaptive and safe. New and enhanced technology, information security protections and safety protocols keep the health and well-being in mind of employees and the security of our systems protected as we transition to a new way of working.

The CalSTRS 2022-25 Strategic Plan places focus on supporting a hybrid workforce model. By evaluating our Return to Office efforts, CalSTRS can continue to make well-informed decisions about how to support and promote the engagement and well-being of staff across all parts of the organization, while prioritizing our service commitments to our members.