

To attract top talent in a competitive education market, Ukiah Unified School District needed a recruitment campaign that would differentiate the district from larger, more urban school systems while showcasing its unique advantages. The Why U? recruitment piece was designed to position Ukiah Unified as an ideal destination for educators who value natural beauty, small-town charm, and a high quality of life ? without sacrificing competitive pay and career growth opportunities.

Strategic Positioning: Ukiah Unified is located two hours north of San Francisco, nestled in the Coastal Redwoods and Northern California Wine Country. Rather than competing directly with large districts in urban centers, our recruitment campaign embraced Ukiah?s unique offerings: ? A thriving food and wine scene with world-class restaurants and wineries ? Outdoor adventure opportunities in redwood forests, rivers, and the coast ? Affordable housing?a major advantage over many California districts ? A progressive strategic plan and a district culture that values and supports educators

The Why U? campaign leveraged the town?s name and recognizable ?U? sculptures at the town?s entrances to create a memorable, double-meaning slogan: ?Why U?? ? Expressing why Ukiah Unified want them as part of the team ?Why Ukiah Unified?? ? Asking candidates to consider why Ukiah Unified is the right choice for them

This bold, visually distinct approach helped the campaign stand out at job fairs and resonated with job seekers who were searching for a work-life balance and a strong professional environment.

Impact & Results: The Why U? recruitment piece became a key driver in the district?s hiring success, contributing to: ? A 98% fill rate for open positions by the end of the primary hiring season ? Increased interest from recent graduates at university job fairs ? A higher volume of applications, allowing the district to be more selective in hiring ? A stronger district identity that helps retain staff by reinforcing the benefits of living and working in Ukiah ? Better quality of candidates

By aligning branding, messaging, and recruitment strategy, the Why U? campaign effectively positioned Ukiah Unified as a first-choice employer, helping the district attract and retain top educators despite its rural location.