

The “We are TUSD” video was shown at our Opening Day Kick-Off in Turlock Unified School District on August 13, 2024. The previous year we had shown a video, “Made in TUSD,” which showcased current staff who had attended TUSD schools. This year we wanted to celebrate all of our staff in a shorter format video that recognized their many and varied contributions to the “US” in TUSD. At our kick-off, approximately 2,000 TUSD staff gathered at Pitman High School for a professional development presentation. Before they were released to work back at their sites, we played the video to inspire and celebrate the work they do every day to support TUSD’s efforts in areas as diverse as the classroom, cafeteria, school buses, playing fields, and more. Although the audience was primarily internal, we also shared this video via ParentSquare and on our social media channels. We also continue to play this video on a loop before the start of every Board meeting to set the tone for our in-person and virtual audience. A lot of research has been done, especially by the former U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy, on the importance of connection: “Three of the essential ingredients to health, happiness, and fulfillment have been eroding actually in our lives and those are relationships, purpose, and service. Relationships, purpose, and service are the pillars of community. They are what make a community work.” This video embodied these three pillars—relationships, purpose, and service; these pillars have also informed our communication strategy this year, especially on social media, in highlighting TUSD as a place to connect and belong. As of February 2024, the “We are TUSD” video has been viewed nearly 1,000 times on TurlockUSD’s YouTube channel. We received a lot of positive feedback from the video not only at our kick-off, but throughout the school year as it has been repeatedly shown at our Board meetings. This is the second time I collaborated with a TUSD student videographer to make a kick-off video which made the finished product even more meaningful.