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# PRESS RELEASE

## GRANDE PRAIRIE TECHNICAL INSTITUTE ANNOUNCES JOSEPH (JOE) LAVALLEY AS PRINCIPAL

MAY 28, 2026

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Grande Prairie, Alberta – Grande Prairie Technical Institute is proud to announce the appointment of Joe LaValley as Principal, marking an exciting and important milestone as the school prepares to open its doors and bring a new skills- and trades-focused public charter school option to families in the Grande Prairie region.

Joe LaValley brings an exceptional combination of school leadership, Career and Technology Studies expertise, Alberta Education experience, trades knowledge, and deep community connection to the role. His career reflects exactly what GP Tech stands for: practical learning, strong relationships, student success, and meaningful pathways from school to career.

With a Master of Education in Educational Studies from the University of Alberta, a background in secondary education and school leadership, and extensive experience as a CTS educator, department head, assistant principal, curriculum coordinator, and Alberta Education curriculum manager, Mr. LaValley is uniquely positioned to lead GP Tech through its founding year. His professional background includes developing and supporting programs related to off-campus education, dual credit, CTS programming, apprenticeship pathways, health and safety, and trades-based learning.



“JOE UNDERSTANDS STUDENTS, HE UNDERSTANDS TRADES, AND HE UNDERSTANDS GP TECH’S VISION AND PHILOSOPHY,” SAID NOSHABA HARJI, FOUNDER OF GP TECH, ON BEHALF OF GRANDE PRAIRIE TECHNICAL INSTITUTE. “HE BRINGS CREDIBILITY, HUMILITY, EXPERIENCE, AND A GENUINE BELIEF THAT STUDENTS THRIVE WHEN LEARNING IS CONNECTED TO REAL LIFE. WE COULD NOT IMAGINE A BETTER LEADER TO HELP LAUNCH GP TECH AND BUILD A SCHOOL CULTURE WHERE STUDENTS FEEL CAPABLE, SUPPORTED, AND EXCITED ABOUT THEIR FUTURE IN TRADES.”

*Mr. LaValley’s experience spans classroom teaching, student success programming, off-campus education, leadership, safety, curriculum development, and provincial-level education work. He has taught mechanics, fabrication, and off-campus education; managed a large automotive repair laboratory; supported students with graduation planning and credit recovery; evaluated and mentored teachers; and worked directly with Alberta Education on CTS, dual credit, and off-campus education initiatives.*

*He is also a Journeyman Red Seal Heavy Duty Mechanic, bringing authentic trades experience into his educational leadership.*

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*Grande Prairie Technical Institute is being developed as a public charter school focused on skills, trades, applied learning, and workforce-connected education. The school's model is designed to help students see the relevance of their learning by connecting academics to real-world projects, technical training, entrepreneurship, and community partnerships.*

**"GP TECH WAS CREATED BECAUSE OUR COMMUNITY NEEDS MORE PATHWAYS FOR STUDENTS," SAID KARIM HARJI, DIRECTOR OF LEARNING FOR GP TECH. "JOE'S LEADERSHIP WILL HELP ENSURE THIS SCHOOL IS NOT ONLY OPERATIONALLY STRONG, BUT ALSO DEEPLY HUMAN- A PLACE WHERE STUDENTS ARE KNOWN, SUPPORTED, CHALLENGED, AND INSPIRED."**

**"I AM HONOURED TO BE PART OF THE LAUNCH OF GRANDE PRAIRIE TECHNICAL INSTITUTE," SAID MR. LAVALLEY. "THIS SCHOOL HAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO DO SOMETHING VERY SPECIAL FOR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES IN OUR REGION. GP TECH WILL GIVE YOUNG PEOPLE THE CHANCE TO CONNECT LEARNING WITH PURPOSE, BUILD CONFIDENCE THROUGH HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE, AND SEE A FUTURE FOR THEMSELVES IN SKILLED TRADES, TECHNOLOGY, INDUSTRY, AND COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP."**

*For GP Tech, this appointment is more than a leadership hire. It represents a strong step toward building a school where students can learn through doing, explore meaningful career pathways, and develop the academic, technical, and personal skills needed for success beyond graduation.*

*Families, students, industry partners, and community members are encouraged to follow GP Tech's updates, share the announcement, and learn more about enrollment and upcoming information sessions.*

*For more information, please visit:*

*<https://www.gptechnical.ca/>*

*Email: [info@gptechnical.ca](mailto:info@gptechnical.ca)*



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