

Tri-Cities Native Returns Home as School Superintendent After Leading Schools Across Washington and Around the World

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PATERSON, WA, UNITED STATES, July 12, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- More than twenty years after leaving the Tri-Cities for his first school leadership position, local educator [Aaron Chavez](#) has returned to the region as Superintendent of the [Paterson School District](#).

“

Coming back to the Tri-Cities feels like coming home, these communities helped shape who I am as a person and educator.”

Aaron Chavez

Chavez began his educational career in the Tri Cities area and departed the Finley School District in 2003 to accept his first leadership role in Almira, Washington. That opportunity launched a career spanning more than two decades and taking him across Washington State and

around the world.

Throughout his career, Chavez has served as a teacher, principal, superintendent, executive director, and international school leader in communities including Almira, Brewster, Mattawa, Soap Lake, Spokane, and Guangzhou, China.

Most recently, Chavez served as Director of International Schools in China, overseeing multiple international Canadian schools and supporting students from diverse cultural backgrounds.

“Coming back to the Tri Cities feels like coming home,” Chavez said. “This community helped shape who I am as a person and educator. I’m grateful for the opportunity to serve students and families in a region that gave me my start.”

In addition to his work in education, Chavez has earned recognition as a chainsaw artist, creating wildlife sculptures and public art throughout the Pacific Northwest.

His passion for carving recently inspired another creative venture. Earlier this year, Chavez published **Brin and Melly**, a children's book inspired by a grizzly bear and owl carving he

created while working in Guangzhou, China. The story follows an unlikely friendship between a lonely grizzly bear and a humorous owl as they discover the value of courage, kindness, and friendship.

The book quickly reached the #1 New Release position in multiple Amazon children's book categories and has continued to gain support from readers throughout the Pacific Northwest and beyond.

"What started as a chainsaw carving eventually became a children's book," Chavez said. "It's a reminder that sometimes the simplest ideas can grow into something much bigger than we ever imagined."

Throughout his career, Chavez has focused on building strong school cultures, strengthening community partnerships, and creating opportunities for students to succeed. Those same priorities will guide his work as he begins this new chapter with the Paterson School District.

From local classrooms to international campuses, and from chainsaw carvings to children's books, Chavez's journey has come full circle as he returns home to serve the community near where his educational career began.

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Aaron Chavez standing with the original Brin and Melly in Guangzhou, China

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