

# Chagrin VALLEY TIMES

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## Many still await answers in coach investigation

By SUE REID

While Chagrin Falls teacher and coach Paul Perrine remains on paid administrative leave this week following an investigation into misconduct that was launched in March, the Chagrin Falls Education Association union sites a “toxic culture” within the district.

The Chagrin Falls Police officially closed their investigation into the matter as of late April, with no criminal charges resulting.

But the school’s investigation remains ongoing, with Mr. Perrine still on paid administrative leave since late March pending the conclusion of an investigation into potential misconduct.

Chagrin Falls Superintendent Jennifer Penczarski declined comment again last week, citing the ongoing investigation.

“We do not comment during the pendency of ongoing investigations,” Dr. Penczarski said.

But many, including the teacher’s union and parents, are asking for answers.

“The Chagrin Falls Education Association welcomes any thoughtful and thorough investigation into any allegations involving the well-being of our students,” CFEA President Lisa Salyers said following last week’s Board of Education meeting where more than 125 turned out, including a vast majority of teachers donning black union T-shirts.

“The students are, and always have been, the top priority of every dedicated educator in this

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## Safety Forum recommends a good offense

By SUE REID

The physical security measures in place – including locked entrances to all Chagrin Falls school buildings – are just one segment of a complete multi-faceted approach when it comes to school safety.

That was part of the message delivered to the nearly 60 attendees at Monday’s School Safety Forum presented by the district in the high school cafeteria in conjunction with police from Chagrin Falls and South Russell.

Various experts in the area of school safety also weighed in on what is a relevant topic and concern in today’s world.

“Public safety, especially in our schools, is one of the hardest pieces to talk about,” Superintendent Jennifer Penczarski said in opening the forum.

The reason is that, while everything the district does is open and transparent, when it comes to school safety there are “so many pieces and parts we can’t share,” she said.

“Things need to be kept private to keep the students safe,” she noted.

Chagrin Falls High School Vice Principal Amanda Rassi, the district chair for the School Safety Committee, also provided an overview, highlighting a robust approach to school safety in all areas.

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## Sweet lesson learned



Photo by Michael Steinberg  
Five-year-old Maria Jabbour, of Pepper Pike, cradles in her hands one of nine baby chicks that hatched last week following 20 days of incubation in her Orange Inclusive Pre-school classroom. In the background is Charlie Hill, of Chagrin Falls. Full story appears on B-1.

## West Fest kicks off summer fun

By SUE REID

The village – West Street to be exact – was alive with the sights and sounds of summer during an event last Friday evening that was rooted in community.

West Fest 2023, featuring live music, games, craft cocktails and more, drew hundreds to the street, barricaded off in true “block party” form.

Throughout the event, party-goers milled in and out of the various restaurants and businesses along the street, including M Bevy, Sushi Junki, the Inn of Chagrin and more.

“This is about the community,” said Bret Adams, founder of the Monven Group which presented the event, “and kicks off summer.”

It was also a catalyst into this week’s Blossom Time, Mr. Adams continued.

“We wanted another layer of community involvement to kick off the patio season,” he said.

While many in attendance were part of last year’s first-ever West Fest party, some came for the first time.

“This is my first West Fest,” Dominic Valerian, of Gates Mills, said. “It’s a totally different atmosphere and different energy down here.”

He was texting more friends to take part, he said.

“We come to West Street two to three times a week,” added Kyle Dillon, of Mentor, who happened upon West Fest, not realizing it was



Photo by Michael Steinberg  
Aiana Mariná, of Aurora, enjoys sake at Sushi Junki following her try at the front patio’s “Gong Show,” which featured ice cubes shaped like shot glasses and thrown at the holes in the wall. It was among the many attractions at West Fest 2023, attracting nearly 1,000 to West Street last week.

going on until arriving for happy hour at M Italian. “We heard and saw it was a street fest, and thought, “Sweet! This is cool!”

West Fest attracted people of all ages, including

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