



# JOSH MANDEL

## STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

Momentum Grows for Statewide Government Transparency with Over 420 Local Government and School Districts Partnering with OhioCheckbook.com

Press Release - Ohio Treasurer's Office

WILLOUGHBY &ndash; Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel stood today with Lake County local government and school officials and announced the launch of Perry Township, Painesville Township, Perry Local Schools, Mentor Public Schools and Riverside Local Schools online checkbooks on OhioCheckbook.com. Also announced today are partnerships with Kirtland Local Schools, Fairport Harbor Village Schools and the Ohio Treasurer's office to post their spending online. Last year, Treasurer Mandel launched OhioCheckbook.com, which sets a new national standard for government transparency and for the first time in Ohio history puts all state spending information on the internet. OhioCheckbook.com recently earned Ohio the number one ranking in the country for government transparency.

Treasurer Mandel was joined at today's announcement by Kirtland Local Schools Board Member Tim Cosgrove, Superintendent Stephen Barrett and Treasurer of Kirtland Local Schools and Mentor Public Schools Dan Wilson. Also joining Treasurer Mandel was Riverside Local Schools Treasurer Mike Rock and Perry Township Fiscal Officer Christine Page.

The following is a breakdown of today's local government checkbook sites:

Perry Township's online checkbook includes over 11,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$11 million of total spending over the past three years.

Painesville Township's online checkbook includes over 5,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$7 million of total spending over fiscal year 2014.

Mentor Schools' online checkbook includes over 61,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$63 million of total spending over the past three fiscal years.

Perry Schools' online checkbook includes over 26,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$39 million of total spending over the past two fiscal years.

Riverside Schools' online checkbook includes over 31,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$126 million of total spending over the past three fiscal years.

"I believe the people of Lake County have a right to know how their tax money is being spent and I applaud local leaders here for partnering with the Treasurer's office to post their finances on OhioCheckbook.com," said Treasurer Mandel. "By partnering and posting local government checkbooks, taxpayers across Ohio are empowered with a powerful tool to hold public officials accountable within their communities."

"On behalf of Perry Township and Perry Public Library, I'm honored to be a contributing member of this project," said Fiscal Officer Christine Page. "Open and accessible public records has been a hallmark of my career both with Perry Township and Perry Public Library. I'm happy to provide the information and make it even more accessible to the general public."

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"Our team at Mentor Schools works diligently to provide a high quality education to students while stretching tax-payer dollars as far as we can by maximizing resources," said Mentor Schools Superintendent Matthew Miller. "Mr. Wilson keeps the Chief Financial Section of our website up-to-date and regularly encourages our community members to take a look at our finances so they can see how and what we're doing at any time."

"We are pleased to join Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel in his pursuit of openness and full disclosure of the fiscal management of government at all levels," said Mentor Schools and Kirtland Schools Treasurer Dan Wilson. "OhioCheckbook.com builds upon our local posting of the monthly financial statements, including a list of bills paid, that began in 2005."

"We are pleased to partner with the Treasurer's Office to make the Perry Local School District and Fairport Harbor School District's financial information easily accessible on OhioCheckbook.com," said Perry Schools and Fairport Harbor Schools Chief Financial Officer Lewis Galante. "We're excited about the ability to provide greater transparency to our community's taxpayers in a convenient, user friendly way."

"Riverside Local School District is excited to partner with the State Treasurer's office on OhioCheckbook.com," said Riverside Schools Treasurer Mike Rock. This transparency tool will allow taxpayers to find financial details in regards to the school district and to be a starting point for any further inquiries that the district can assist community members with understanding school finances. This tool provides an opportunity for the district to reinforce trust and showcase the hard work that the district does every day for the school community."

On April 7th, Treasurer Mandel sent a letter to 18,062 local government and school officials representing 3,962 local governments throughout the state calling on them to place their checkbook level data on OhioCheckbook.com and extending an invitation to partner with his office at no cost to local governments. These local governments include cities, counties, townships, schools, library districts and other special districts.

A large coalition of statewide and local government organizations have expressed support for OhioCheckbook.com and local government transparency, including:

- Ohio Municipal League
- Ohio Township Association
- Ohio Association of School Business Officials
- Buckeye Association of School Administrators
- County Commissioner Association of Ohio
- County Auditor Association of Ohio
- Ohio Newspaper Association
- Ohio Society of CPAs
- Buckeye Institute
- Common Cause Ohio

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OhioCheckbook.com was launched on December 2, 2014, marking the first time in Ohio history when citizens could actually see every expenditure in state government. Since its launch, OhioCheckbook.com has received overwhelming support from newspapers and groups across the state and, as of December 11, 2015 there have been more than 405,000 total searches on the site.

OhioCheckbook.com displays more than \$490 billion in spending over the past eight years, including more than 134 million transactions. The website includes cutting-edge features such as:

- “Google-style” contextual search capabilities, to allow users to sort by keyword, department, category or vendor;
- Fully dynamic interactive charts to drill down on state spending;
- Functionality to compare state spending year-over-year or among agencies; and,
- Capability to share charts or checks with social media networks, and direct contact for agency fiscal offices.

In March, the U.S. Public Interest Research Group (U.S. PIRG) released their annual “Following the Money 2015” report and Treasurer Mandel earned Ohio the number one transparency ranking in the country for providing online access to government spending data. Ohio was prominently featured in the report after climbing from 46th to 1st in spending transparency as a result of Treasurer Mandel’s release of OhioCheckbook.com. Due to the launch of OhioCheckbook.com, Ohio received a perfect score of 100 points this year &ndash; the highest score in the history of the U.S. PIRG transparency rankings.

The Treasurer’s office is partnering with OpenGov, a leading Silicon Valley government technology company, to provide residents of Ohio the ability to view and search local government expenditures in a user-friendly, digital format. “Ohio is setting the standard for financial transparency on an unprecedented scale. We are excited to partner with the Treasurer’s office to bring world-class technology to communities large and small across the state,” said Zachary Bookman, CEO of OpenGov.

For more information or to view your local government website, visit the Local Government option on OhioCheckbook.com or click on:

- [PerryTownshipLake.OhioCheckbook.com](http://PerryTownshipLake.OhioCheckbook.com);
- [PainesvilleTownship.OhioCheckbook.com](http://PainesvilleTownship.OhioCheckbook.com);
- [MentorSchools.OhioCheckbook.com](http://MentorSchools.OhioCheckbook.com);
- [PerrySchoolsLake.OhioCheckbook.com](http://PerrySchoolsLake.OhioCheckbook.com);
- [RiversideSchoolsLake.OhioCheckbook.com](http://RiversideSchoolsLake.OhioCheckbook.com).

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