



JOSH MANDEL

STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

Momentum Grows for Statewide Government Transparency with Over 475 Local Government and School Districts Partnering with OhioCheckbook.com

Press Release - Ohio Treasurer's Office

BEAVERCREEK – Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel announced today partnerships with Beavercreek City Schools, the Village of Spring Valley and the Ohio Treasurer's office to place their spending online at OhioCheckbook.com. Also announced today is the launch of the Caesarscreek Township online checkbook on OhioCheckbook.com. In December 2014, 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.

Caesarscreek Township's online checkbook includes over 2,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$1 million of total spending over the past three years. Caesarscreek Township is the sixth township in Greene County to post their spending online on OhioCheckbook.com.

Beavercreek City Schools is the second school district in Greene County to partner with the Treasurer's office to post their spending online and the Village of Spring Valley is the first village in Greene County to partner with the Treasurer's office to post their spending online on OhioCheckbook.com.

"I believe the people of Greene County have a right to know how their tax money is being spent, and I applaud local leaders here for partnering with my office to post the finances on OhioCheckbook.com," said Treasurer Mandel. "By posting local government spending online, we are empowering taxpayers across Ohio to hold public officials accountable."

"In the spirit of transparency, on November 19, 2015, the Board of Education authorized implementation and participation in the OhioCheckbook.com program," said Beavercreek City Schools Treasurer Penny Rucker. "We are happy to serve the Beavercreek community with open access to our financial information."

"As new Mayor of the Village of Spring Valley, I really wanted to bring the village into the 21st century," said Village of Spring Valley Mayor Doug Walters. "Adopting the checkbook website is an important step in reflecting our commitment to implement these essential technological advances."

"The township really wanted to have a part in the efforts of the State Treasurer's office to improve upon transparency throughout Ohio," said Caesarscreek Township Fiscal Officer Jim Randall. "Especially given that the rankings for transparency in Ohio, prior to this initiative, were so low. Moreover, we really want citizens to take an interest and be invested. An educated and informed constituency equates to a better functioning township."

On April 7, 2015 Treasurer Mandel sent a letter to 18,062 local government and school officials representing 3,962 local

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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

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 January 19, 2016 there have been more than 435,000 total searches on the site.

OhioCheckbook.com displays more than \$496 billion in spending over the past eight years, including more than 135 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 2015, 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 – 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

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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 visit OhioCheckbook.com or visit Caesarscreek Township's online checkbook at CaesarscreekTownshipGreene.OhioCheckbook.com.

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