



JOSH MANDEL

STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

Momentum Grows for Statewide Government Transparency with Over 490 Local Government and School Districts Partnering with OhioCheckbook.com

Press Release - Ohio Treasurer's Office

MASSILLON – Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel announced today the launch of Massillon City Schools, Tuslaw Local Schools, Osnaburg Local Schools, Canton Township and Nimishillen Township online checkbooks on OhioCheckbook.com. Also announced today is a partnership with the Village of Navarre and the Ohio Treasurer's office to post their spending 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.

The Ohio Treasurer's office was joined at today's announcement by Massillon City Schools Superintendent Richard Goodright and Treasurer Sandy Moeglin, Tuslaw Local Schools Superintendent Alan Osler and Treasurer Barbara Markland, Osnaburg Local Schools Superintendent Todd Boggs and Treasurer Christine Robenstine, Canton Township Trustee Bill Smith and Village of Navarre Mayor Robert Benson and Fiscal Officer Anne Johnson.

Massillon City Schools, Tuslaw Local Schools and Osnaburg Local Schools are the first school districts in Stark County to post their spending on OhioCheckbook.com. Canton Township and Nimishillen Township are the fifth and sixth townships in Stark County to post their spending on OhioCheckbook.com and the Village of Navarre is the first village in Stark County to partner with the Treasurer's office to post their spending online.

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

Massillon City Schools' online checkbook includes over 95,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$141 million of total spending over the past three Fiscal Years.

Tuslaw Local Schools' online checkbook includes over 77,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$63 million of total spending over the past six Fiscal Years.

Osnaburg Local Schools' online checkbook includes over 39,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$42 million of total spending over the past five Fiscal Years.

Canton Township's online checkbook includes over 10,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$21 million of total spending over the past five years.

Nimishillen Township's online checkbook includes over 11,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$7 million of total spending over the past five years.

"I believe the people of Stark County have a right to know how their tax money is being spent, and I applaud local leaders here for



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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."

"Massillon City Schools, Osnaburg Local Schools and Tuslaw Local Schools have made the choice to partner with the Ohio Treasurer's office to display our expenditures to the public," said Massillon City Schools Superintendent Richard Goodright, Osnaburg Local Schools Superintendent Todd Boggs and Tuslaw Local Schools Superintendent Alan Osler in a joint statement. "Like all Ohio Schools, we work hard every day for our children."

"We want to be as open as possible," said Canton Township Trustee Bill Smith. "These are not our records, they're the citizens' records and they have a right to know what's going on. We applaud the Treasurer's Office to have started this great program!"

"OhioCheckbook.com is an innovative opportunity for the Township to increase its transparency to our residents," said Nimishillen Township Fiscal Officer Brian Kandel. "This is an accessible, easy to use tool and allows our taxpayers to see where their dollars are being spent."

"Elected officials are required to receive Sunshine Law Training to learn about transparency and accountability of public business," said Village of Navarre Treasurer Anne Johnson. "With the OhioCheckbook.com program, taxpayers have the opportunity to see not only the state spending, but also spending locally, including villages, townships and school districts."

On April 7, 2015 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

OhioCheckbook.com was launched on December 2, 2014, marking the first time in Ohio history when citizens could actually see

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every expenditure in state government. Since its launch, OhioCheckbook.com has received overwhelming support from newspapers and groups across the state and, as of February 2, 2016 there have been more than 451,000 total searches on the site.

OhioCheckbook.com displays more than \$506 billion in spending over the past eight years, including more than 137 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 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:

MassillonSchools.OhioCheckbook.com;
TuslawLocalSchools.OhioCheckbook.com;
OsnaburgSchools.OhioCheckbook.com;
CantonTownshipStark.OhioCheckbook.com;
NimishillenTownshipStark.OhioCheckbook.com.

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