



JOSH MANDEL

STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

Bowling Green State University and Central State University Become First Public Universities in Ohio to Post Checkbook Level Expenditures Online

Press Release - Ohio Treasurer's Office

COLUMBUS – Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel, Inter-University Council President Bruce Johnson, Bowling Green State University President Mary Ellen Mazey and Central State University Vice President of Administration and Finance & CFO Curtis Pettis announced today the launch of Bowling Green State University and Central State University's online checkbooks on OhioCheckbook.com. Also announced today is the launch of the Central Ohio Technical College's 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 government transparency ranking in the country for the second year in a row.

With today's announcement, Bowling Green State University and Central State University become the first public universities in the state to post their spending on OhioCheckbook.com. Central Ohio Technical College also becomes the first public technical college in Ohio to post their spending on OhioCheckbook.com.

In May 2016, Miami University, Ohio University and Wright State University also formally agreed to partner with the Treasurer's office to post their checkbook level expenditures online at OhioCheckbook.com.

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

Bowling Green State University's online checkbook includes over 27,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$39 million of total spending over Fiscal Year 2015.

Central State University's online checkbook includes over 7,700 individual transactions that represent more than \$17 million of total spending over Fiscal Year 2015.

Central Ohio Technical College's online checkbook includes over 36,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$23 million of total spending over Fiscal Year 2016.

"I believe the taxpayers of Ohio have a right to know how their tax money is being spent, and I applaud these Universities for partnering with my office to post the finances on OhioCheckbook.com," said Treasurer Mandel. "My vision is to create an army of citizen watchdogs who are empowered to hold public officials accountable."

"Public Universities in Ohio support open access to public information for Ohio's taxpayers," said Bruce Johnson, President of the Inter-University Council. "We are pleased that Bowling Green, Central State and several other universities are making progress at getting their data online. We also commend Treasurer Mandel for his efforts to make the financial information as transparent

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as possible.”

“BGSU is committed to being a good steward of both taxpayer funds and our students’ tuition and fees,” stated Mary Ellen Mazey, President of Bowling Green State University. “We are always looking for meaningful ways to demonstrate that we’re operating efficiently and effectively in supporting our students’ academic success. We appreciate Treasurer Mandel’s goals for transparency and making our financial information more easily accessible. We’re pleased to play a leadership role in this project.”

“Central State University is committed to transparency and we are pleased to be joining BGSU as the first two universities to place their spending on OhioCheckbook.com,” added Curtis Pettis, Vice President for Administration and Finance & CFO of Central State University. “We thank Treasurer Mandel for the chance to make our spending information easily accessible, searchable and user friendly.”

“Central Ohio Technical College appreciates the opportunity from the Ohio Treasurer’s office to make our spending information easily accessible,” said COTC President Bonnie L. Coe, Ph.D. “We are proud to be the first technical college online and among the first colleges and universities to post their spending online. The OhioCheckbook.com initiative is an easy way for us to increase transparency and show that we are always working to achieve the most for our community.”

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 every expenditure in state government. Since its launch, OhioCheckbook.com has received overwhelming support from newspapers and groups across the state and, as of May 11, 2017 there have been more than 762,000 total searches on the site.

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OhioCheckbook.com displays more than \$592 billion in spending over the past nine years, including more than 161 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.

In April 2016, U.S. PIRG announced that Treasurer Mandel earned Ohio the number one government transparency ranking in the country for the second consecutive year in a row. Due to the launch of OhioCheckbook.com, Ohio again received the highest perfect score of 100 points this year – marking the second time in two years Ohio received the highest possible 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:

- BowlingGreenStateUniversity.OhioCheckbook.com;
- CentralStateUniversity.OhioCheckbook.com;
- CentralOhioTechnicalCollege.OhioCheckbook.com.

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