



# JOSH MANDEL

## STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

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By Lou Whitmire

MANSFIELD &mdash; State treasurer Josh Mandel learned Monday some students at Mansfield Senior High School are saving their hard-earned cash.

Mandel visited Virginia Groff's Personal Finance class Monday morning to see how students like the resources.

The financial literacy program is part of a state initiative to bolster personal finance skills.

This new initiative is a product of an Ohio law signed Jan. 3, 2007. This law requires that financial literacy be taught to high school students throughout Ohio, beginning with the graduating class of 2014.

Richland Bank pays for the program.

The bank's marketing manager Kristie Massa said the program is free to the school.

She said she hopes more schools follow suit and students get interested in financial literacy.

"It just makes our whole community much much stronger," she said.

Mandel told students that understanding personal finances will make their lives much more enjoyable as adults.

Mandel interacted with students about the software package, which provides practical information on topics ranging from credit cards and mortgages to student loans and credit scores. Developed by EverFi, a Washington, D.C.-based educational technology firm, the program was introduced at Senior High last year, although Senior High has had financial literacy instruction for several years.

"Regardless of what you do after high school &ndash; college, the military or the job market &ndash; you're going to need the financial tools to develop a budget, balance a checkbook and manage a mortgage," Mandel said. "If you can't do those things, it's going to make your life a lot more difficult and stressful."

Massa asked students what they found most interesting about the financial literacy program.

"It teaches you how to handle your money," Duwan Bradley said.

"It teaches you how not to waste your money," one of the girls in the class said.

"It teaches you about saving," a third student added.

"Saving is important. Saving is huge," Massa said.

Mandel told the class he is working to put the state's finances online.

"We want to put the state's checkbook online so you can see how every dollar is being spent," he said. "It's a way to make politicians and bureaucrats accountable."

He said the point of doing so is to empower citizens to hold politicians accountable.

"In my mind the greatest way to avoid government waste and to stop government waste is to increase transparency," Mandel said.

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