



JOSH MANDEL

STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

SPRINGFIELD – Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel stood today with Northwestern Local School officials and announced a partnership between the Ohio Treasurer's office and the first local government in Clark County to place their spending online at OhioCheckbook.com. 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 President of the Northwestern Local Schools Board of Education Richard Birt, Northwestern Schools Treasurer Dave Bollheimer and State Senator Chris Widener. Also joining the announcement were Northwestern Local Schools Superintendent Jesse Steiner, Interim Superintendent Matt Curtis, Clark County ESC Superintendent Dan Bennett and Board of Education Members Pam Marton, Gene Pencil, Donna Myers and Russ Steele. Northwestern Local Schools is the first entity in Clark County to partner with OhioCheckbook.com. Northwestern Local Schools is also the seventh school district in Ohio and third district in Southwest Ohio to announce a partnership with the Treasurer's office to place their spending online.

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.

"I believe the people of Clark 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. "My vision is to create an army of citizen watchdogs who are empowered to hold public officials accountable."

"Here in the Northwestern Local School District community, we believe in frequent, open, and honest communication," said President of the Northwestern Local Schools Board of Education Richard Birt. "By participating in this program, Treasurer Mandel has given us another tool to showcase to our community and the state how we are investing our financial resources back into our number one priority- our students!"

"We appreciate the support we receive from the Northwestern community," said Treasurer Dave Bollheimer. "They pay our bills, so they should be able to see where their money is going. OhioCheckbook.com is a great tool for us to communicate this information to our community. We look forward to partnering with Treasurer Mandel and his staff to help make OhioCheckbook.com even better for Ohio's school districts and their communities."

"I want to congratulate the Northwestern school district for demonstrating a clear commitment to transparency by moving its checkbook online," stated State Senator Chris Widener. "This is an important step to improve accountability and responsiveness to local taxpayers."

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

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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 June 18, 2015, there have been more than 240,000 total searches on the site.

OhioCheckbook.com displays more than \$408 billion in spending over the past seven years, including more than 112 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 – 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 visit OhioCheckbook.com.

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