



JOSH MANDEL

STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

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By Jonathan Tressler
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Interested parties may now view the financial records of Chardon, the Fairport Harbor Exempted Village School District and the Perry Public Library online anytime.

State Treasurer Josh Mandel paid a visit to Fairport Harding High School Feb. 3 to announce the Lake County additions to his online government transparency site OhioCheckbook.com.

"I believe the people of Lake 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 Mandel, who paid a similar visit to Chardon officials later that day. "By posting local government spending online, we are empowering taxpayers across Ohio to hold public officials accountable."

According to a statement released by Mandel's office Feb. 3, Fairport Harbor Village Schools' online checkbook includes over 2,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$3 million of total spending over the past Fiscal Year.

Perry Public Library's online checkbook includes over 5,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$2 million of total spending over the past three years, the same statement reads.

"We are pleased to be part of Treasurer Mandel's OhioCheckbook.com initiative," Fairport Harbor Village School Treasurer Lewis Galante said. "This innovative tool complements the financial transparency already provided by the school district in a user-friendly and convenient way for our taxpayers."

The Perry Public Library, likewise, expressed its eagerness to participate.

"This is one further step in our 'open door' policy regarding the finances of our public institution," said Perry Public Library Fiscal Officer Christine Page. "Access to this information through a source such as the Treasurer of State's office makes the information, in our opinion, that much more credible, useful and usable to the general public and other entities. We appreciate the opportunity to be a partner in this project."

A Chardon official concurred.

"The site provides information in an easily navigated format that will help our citizens know where their tax dollars are being spent," Chardon City Manager Randy Sharpe said. "This initiative is a great avenue to improve public trust and allows citizens to see the good job their officials are doing in managing taxpayer dollars."

Mandel launched the website in December 2014. Since then, Ohio was named the most transparent state for providing online



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access to government spending, according to the U.S. Public Interest Research Group. In 2014, Ohio was ranked 46th.

The site initially started with finance information from the state budget, but has since partnered with local government entities across the state to provide their finance information as well.

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