



# JOSH MANDEL

## STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

NORTH ROYALTON &ndash; Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel stood today with North Royalton City School officials and Cuyahoga Heights Local School officials and announced a partnership between the Ohio Treasurer's office and the first school districts in Cuyahoga 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 State Senator Tom Patton (District &ndash; 24), North Royalton City Schools Superintendent Greg Gurka, North Royalton City Schools Treasurer Biagio Sidoti and North Royalton School Board members Anne Reinkober, Jacquelyn Arendt, Dr. John Kelly, Barbara Ann Zindroski and Dr. Susan Clark.

Superintendent of Cuyahoga Heights Local Schools Joseph Bergant and Cuyahoga Heights Local Schools Board Members Holly Thacker and Gary Suchocki also joined Treasurer Mandel. North Royalton City Schools and Cuyahoga Heights Local Schools are the first school districts in Cuyahoga County to partner with OhioCheckbook.com. These districts are also the ninth and tenth school districts in 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 Cuyahoga 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."

"I'm proud to see the North Royalton School District join the growing list of Ohio school districts who are partnering with Treasurer Mandel's office to open their checkbooks to the public," said State Senator Tom Patton (District &ndash; 24). "North Royalton School Treasurer Sidoti and his colleagues have worked hard to achieve a new level of transparency and accountability for the school district, and I'm confident that taxpayers will be pleased with the results."

"The North Royalton City School District has a rich history of effective communication with our parents and community," said North Royalton Superintendent Greg Gurka. "OhioCheckbook.com is another method for us to utilize a cost neutral application to continue our open communication."

"The North Royalton City School District has always been committed to financial excellence through its previous 22 years of Certificates of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting," said North Royalton Treasurer Biagio Sidoti. "We are grateful to be selected by the Treasurer of the State of Ohio's Office to be one of the first districts in the State of Ohio to partner with the State Treasurer in the application of OhioCheckbook.com to further demonstrate our commitment to Excellence in Financial Reporting. The implementation process has been very smooth without incurring additional cost to our operations."

"Cuyahoga Heights Board of Education has been working very hard to input additional internal controls in the school district," said Cuyahoga Heights Superintendent Joseph Bergant. "Josh Mandel's initiative to put school district spending information online will help build community support and allow interested taxpayers to see how their money is being spent in our public schools."

A large coalition of statewide and local government organizations have expressed support for OhioCheckbook.com and local government transparency, including:



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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 July 1, 2015, there have been more than 249,000 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 &ndash; 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](http://OhioCheckbook.com).

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