



# JOSH MANDEL

## STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

Wheeling Intelligencer  
By Alan Olson  
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The first entity in Monroe County to make a move to the online OhioCheckbook.com program, the Switzerland of Ohio Local Board of Education voiced their support for embracing what they hope will be a new era of transparency.

Meeting with Ohio Treasurer's Office Deputy Director of Public Affairs Dan Risko, board members had the basic concepts of the online checkbook outlined, both for their benefit and to reinforce the implications of the move. OhioCheckbook.com, launched in December 2014 by Treasurer Josh Mandel, is a public-access site meant to reveal financial information of public bodies in the state. While the information has always been publicly available, Risko said the central online service will enable significant strides in transparency and access for the bodies involved.

"We have over 390 local governments that have their websites online now," Risko said, adding that Switzerland of Ohio was the first in Monroe County, and others were still pending. "Switzerland is the 90th district in the state to come online, and we are getting more and more every day. We have more than 600,000 searches on the site as of today, so we know people are using it."

In a written statement, Mandel cited a report from the U.S. Public Interest Research Group, which indicated that through programs such as the online database, Ohio's transparency had improved from 46th in the country, to No. 1, for two years running.

"One of my objectives since taking this post has been to increase awareness of the district's finances, meanwhile one of the board's goals has been to become more transparent to our stakeholders," district Treasurer Lance Erlwein said. "OhioCheckbook.com provides us a powerful tool to help us accomplish both objectives."

"I just think this is a great thing since this can all be out in the public now, and everyone can look at what the money is spent on," board member Bev Anderson added. Member Denise Riley also added that she felt the openness of the financial records would be a great asset.

Both Riley and Anderson were elected to the school board in 2015 on platforms of openness, after concerns that the district had violated the Ohio Open Meetings Act.

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