

October, 2015

Dusty Rhodes
Hamilton County Auditor
138 East Court Street
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

Dear Dusty,

Sometimes it is hard to believe, looking back on the road traveled, how difficult it could be to reach what started out as something you thought would be easily attainable.

When I was first elected to the Northwest Local School Board, I believed that we could collectively improve the fiduciary trust and our standing in the community by the simple step of putting our expenditures online in a searchable database. After all, it was 2008 and the technology was available. The only organization that I knew of that had successfully accomplished this was the Hamilton County Auditor's Office.

As you certainly recall, I invited you, and you accepted my invitation to speak at one of our board meetings, to tell us how the auditor's office had set up their site and how we might be able to do the same. You probably remember the less-than-enthusiastic response from others in the room. I did appreciate your coming to the meeting that Monday night long ago, and it only solidified my resolve to someday, somehow get our expenditures online, as people deserve the opportunity to see how their money is being spent.

In the years since, I have always appreciated your continued encouragement as we have crossed paths at various times.

Last month, the Northwest Local School District became the very first of 612 public school districts in the State of Ohio to put our expenditures online in a searchable database at www.ohiocheckbook.com. I believe that having our expenditures online in a searchable database will breed innovation, as people will see what we spend money on and better ideas will result. It will improve the public trust, as every dollar spent is now visible. Transparency promotes good spending behavior, as, in your words, "a thousand sets of eyes are watching us".

I appreciate your early leadership on the issue. The local push for many years and the development of www.ohiocheckbook.com by Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel has led us to where we are today. This trend is catching on and the culture is changing. Thank you for your help, encouragement and support.

Sincerely,



Dan Unger
Northwest Local School Board