



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

April 20, 2015

Mr. W. Montgomery Meitler
Senior Counsel
Texas Education Agency
1701 North Congress Avenue
Austin, Texas 78701

OR2015-07619

Dear Mr. Meitler:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under the Public Information Act (the "Act"), chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID# 560478 (TEA PIR# 23685).

The Texas Education Agency (the "agency") received a request for all e-mails sent from a specified Prime Prep Academy e-mail address during a specified time period. You state the agency has redacted access device numbers pursuant to section 552.136(c) of the Government Code, personal e-mail addresses subject to section 552.137 of the Government Code pursuant to Open Records Decision No. 684 (2009), and social security numbers pursuant to section 552.147(b) of the Government Code.¹ You claim the submitted information is exempted from disclosure under section 552.116 of the Government Code. We

¹Section 552.136(c) authorizes a governmental body to redact the information described in section 552.136(b) without the necessity of requesting a decision from this office. Gov't Code § 552.136(b), (c). If a governmental body redacts such information, it must notify the requestor in accordance with section 552.136(e). *Id.* § 552.136(d), (e). Open Records Decision No. 684 is a previous determination to all governmental bodies authorizing them to withhold certain categories of information, including e-mail addresses of members of the public under section 552.137, without the necessity of requesting a decision from this office. *See* ORD 684. Section 552.147(b) authorizes a governmental body to redact a living person's social security number from public release without the necessity of requesting a decision from this office. *See* Gov't Code § 552.147(b).

have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted representative sample of information.²

Section 552.116 of the Government Code provides the following:

(a) An audit working paper of an audit of the state auditor or the auditor of a state agency, an institution of higher education as defined by Section 61.003, Education Code, a county, a municipality, a school district, a hospital district, or a joint board operating under Section 22.074, Transportation Code, including any audit relating to the criminal history background check of a public school employee, is excepted from the requirements of Section 552.021. If information in an audit working paper is also maintained in another record, that other record is not excepted from the requirements of Section 552.021 by this section.

(b) In this section:

(1) "Audit" means an audit authorized or required by a statute of this state or the United States, the charter or an ordinance of a municipality, an order of the commissioners court of a county, the bylaws adopted by or other action of the governing board of a hospital district, a resolution or other action of a board of trustees of a school district, including an audit by the district relating to the criminal history background check of a public school employee, or a resolution or other action of a joint board described by Subsection (a) and includes an investigation.

(2) "Audit working paper" includes all information, documentary or otherwise, prepared or maintained in conducting an audit or preparing an audit report, including:

(A) intra-agency and interagency communications; and

(B) drafts of the audit report or portions of those drafts.

Gov't Code § 552.116. You state the submitted information consists of audit working papers prepared or maintained by the agency's Division of Complaints, Investigations, and Enforcement in conjunction with a pending audit of Prime Prep Academy. You inform us

²We assume the "representative sample" of records submitted to this office is truly representative of the requested records as a whole. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 499 (1988), 497 (1988). This open records letter does not reach, and therefore does not authorize the withholding of, any other requested records to the extent those records contain substantially different types of information than that submitted to this office.

the audit is authorized by section 39.057(a)(14) of the Education Code, which permits special accreditation investigations to be conducted as the commissioner of education determines necessary. *See* Educ. Code § 39.057 (listing circumstances in which the commissioner shall authorize investigations). Based on your representations and our review, we find section 552.116 is applicable to the submitted information. Thus, the agency may withhold the submitted information under section 552.116 of the Government Code.

This letter ruling is limited to the particular information at issue in this request and limited to the facts as presented to us; therefore, this ruling must not be relied upon as a previous determination regarding any other information or any other circumstances.

This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For more information concerning those rights and responsibilities, please visit our website at http://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open/orl_ruling_info.shtml, or call the Office of the Attorney General's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable charges for providing public information under the Act may be directed to the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Alley Latham
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

AKL/dls

Ref: ID# 560478

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)