



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

September 8, 2015

Mr. Harry F. Wright, Jr.
School Attorney
Bryan Independent School District
101 North Texas Avenue
Bryan, Texas 77803

OR2015-16142A

Dear Mr. Wright:

Our office issued Open Records Letter No. 2015-16142 (2015) on August 5, 2015. We have examined this ruling and determined that an error was made in its issuance. When this office determines that an error was made in the decision process under sections 552.301 and 552.306 of the Government Code, and that error resulted in an incorrect decision, we will correct the previously issued ruling. Consequently, this decision serves as the corrected ruling and is a substitute for the decision issued on August 5, 2015. *See generally* Gov't Code § 552.011 (providing that Office of Attorney General may issue decision to maintain uniformity in application, operation, and interpretation of Public Information Act (the "Act"))).

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under the Act. Your request was assigned ID# 583704.

Bryan Independent School District (the "district") received a request for the most recent performance review of a named district employee. You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.101 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.101 of the Government Code excepts from disclosure "information considered to be confidential by law, either constitutional, statutory, or by judicial decision." Gov't Code § 552.101. This section encompasses information protected by other statutes, such as section 21.355 of the Education Code, which provides that "[a] document evaluating the performance of a teacher or administrator is confidential." Educ. Code § 21.355(a). This office has interpreted section 21.355 to apply to any document that evaluates, as that term is commonly understood, the performance of a teacher or an administrator. *See* Open

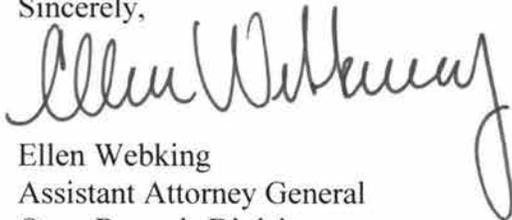
Records Decision No. 643 (1996). We have determined, for purposes of section 21.355, the word “teacher” means a person who is required to and does in fact hold a teaching certificate under subchapter B of chapter 21 of the Education Code and who is engaged in the process of teaching, as that term is commonly defined, at the time of the evaluation. *See id.* at 4. Additionally, the courts have concluded a written reprimand constitutes an evaluation for purposes of section 21.355 as it “reflects the principal’s judgment regarding [a teacher’s] actions, gives corrective direction, and provides for further review.” *North East Indep. Sch. Dist. v. Abbott*, 212 S.W.3d 364 (Tex. App.—Austin 2006, no pet.).

You contend the submitted information is confidential under section 21.355. Upon review, we agree the submitted information consists of an evaluation of a teacher. You submit supporting documentation reflecting the teacher at issue held a teaching certificate under subchapter B of chapter 21 and was acting as a teacher at the time of the evaluation for the purposes of section 21.355. Based on your representations, we find the district must withhold the submitted information under section 552.101 in conjunction with section 21.355(a).

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,



Ellen Webking
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

EW/akg

Ref: ID# 583704

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)