



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

October 13, 2015

Ms. Nancy Nelson
Associate Vice President for Employee Relations
El Paso Community College District
P.O. Box 20500
El Paso, Texas 79998-0500

OR2015-21385

Dear Ms. Nelson:

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# 583003.

The El Paso Community College District (the "district") received a request for the initial and ongoing costs, contracts, and any proposals relating to the district's purchase of Civitas Learning ("Civitas"). Although the district takes no position as to whether the submitted information is excepted under the Act, it states release of the submitted information may implicate the proprietary interests of Civitas. Accordingly, the district states, and provides documentation showing, it notified Civitas of the request for information and of its right to submit arguments to this office as to why the submitted information should not be released. *See Gov't Code* § 552.305(d); *see also* Open Records Decision No. 542 (1990) (statutory predecessor to section 552.305 permits governmental body to rely on interested third party to raise and explain applicability of exception in the Act in certain circumstances). We have reviewed the submitted information.

An interested third party is allowed ten business days after the date of its receipt of the governmental body's notice under section 552.305(d) to submit its reasons, if any, as to why information relating to that party should be withheld from public disclosure. *See Gov't Code* § 552.305(d)(2)(B). As of the date of this letter, we have not received comments from Civitas explaining why the submitted information should not be released. Therefore, we have no basis to conclude Civitas has a protected proprietary interest in the submitted information. *See id.* § 552.110; Open Records Decision Nos. 661 at 5-6 (1999) (to prevent disclosure of commercial or financial information, party must show by specific factual evidence, not conclusory or generalized allegations, release of requested information would cause that party substantial competitive harm), 552 at 5 (1990) (party must establish

prima facie case information is trade secret), 542 at 3. Accordingly, the district may not withhold the submitted information on the basis of any proprietary interest Civitas may have in the information. As no exceptions to disclosure have been raised, the submitted information must be released.

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,



David L. Wheelus
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

DLW/bhf

Ref: ID# 583003

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

Mr. Charles Thornburgh
CEO and Founder
Civitas Learning
1145 West 5th Street
Austin, Texas 78703
(w/o enclosures)