



**KEN PAXTON**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

January 13, 2017

Mr. William M. Buechler  
Counsel for the George West Independent School District  
Buechler & Associates, P.C.  
3660 Stoneridge Road, Suite D-101  
Austin, Texas 78746

OR2017-00947

Dear Mr. Buechler:

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# 641729.

The George West Independent School District (the "district"), which you represent, received a request for a named individual's personnel file. The district released some information responsive to the request but withheld some information under section 552.024 of the Government Code without requesting a decision from this office. *See Gov't Code* §§ 552.024(c)(2), .117(a)(1). Pursuant to section 552.024(c-1) of the Government Code, the requestor has asked this office to review the information and render a decision as to whether it is excepted from disclosure under section 552.117 of the Government Code. We have considered the district's position.

Section 552.117(a)(1) of the Government Code excepts from disclosure the home address and telephone number, emergency contact information, social security number, and family member information of a current or former employee or official of a governmental body who requests this information be kept confidential under section 552.024 of the Government Code, except as provided by section 552.024(a-1). *See id.* §§ 552.117(a)(1), .024. Section 552.024(a-1) of the Government Code provides, "A school district may not require an employee or former employee of the district to choose whether to allow public access to the employee's or former employee's social security number." *Id.* § 552.024(a-1). Thus, the district may only withhold under section 552.117 the home address and telephone number, emergency contact information, and family member information of a current or former employee or official of the district who requests this information be kept confidential under

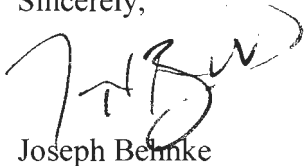
section 552.024. We note a post office box number is not a “home address” for purposes of section 552.117(a). *See* Open Records Decision No. 622 at 4 (1994) (legislative history makes clear that purpose of Gov’t Code § 552.117 is to protect public employees from being harassed at home). Upon review, we find the no portion of the submitted information is subject to section 552.117 of the Government Code. Accordingly, the district may not withhold any portion of the submitted information under section 552.117 of the Government Code.

Section 552.147(a-1) of the Government Code provides, “[t]he social security number of an employee of a school district in the custody of the district is confidential.”<sup>1</sup> Gov’t Code § 552.147(a-1). Thus, section 552.147(a-1) makes the social security numbers of school district employees confidential, without such employees being required to first make a confidentiality election under section 552.024 of the Government Code. *See id.* § 552.024(a-1). Reading sections 552.024(a-1) and 552.147(a-1) together, we conclude that section 552.147(a-1) makes confidential the social security numbers of both current and former school district employees. Accordingly, the district must withhold the redacted social security numbers in the submitted information under section 552.147(a-1) 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](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,



Joseph Behnke  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

JB/som

---

<sup>1</sup>The Office of the Attorney General will raise a mandatory exception on behalf of a governmental body, but ordinarily will not raise other exceptions. Open Records Decision Nos. 481 (1987), 480(1987), 470 (1987).

Ref: ID# 641729

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)