



**KEN PAXTON**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

July 1, 2020

Ms. Ingrid Gunter  
Paralegal  
Lewisville Independent School District  
P.O. Box 217  
Lewisville, Texas 75067

OR2020-16800

Dear Ms. Gunter:

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# 834435.

The Lewisville Independent School District (the "district") received a request for current copier and maintenance contract for the district.<sup>1</sup> Although you take no position regarding whether the submitted information is excepted from disclosure, you state its release may implicate the proprietary interests of Ricoh and Xerox. Accordingly, you state, and provide documentation showing, you notified the interested third parties of the request and their right to submit arguments to this office. *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 to submit its reasons, if any, as to why info relating to that party should not be released. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d)(2)(B). As of the date of this ruling, we have not received comments from Ricoh or Xerox. Thus, we have no basis to conclude a third party has a protected proprietary interest in the submitted info. *See, e.g.,*

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<sup>1</sup> The district sought and received clarification of the information requested. *See* Gov't Code § 552.222 (if request for information is unclear, governmental body may ask requestor to clarify request); *see also* *City of Dallas v. Abbott*, 304 S.W.3d 380, 387 (Tex. 2010) (if governmental entity, acting in good faith, requests clarification of unclear or over-broad request, ten-day period to request attorney general ruling is measured from date request is clarified).

*id.* § 552.110 (requiring the provision of specific factual evidence demonstrating the applicability of the exception). Accordingly, the district may not withhold any of the submitted info on the basis of any proprietary interest a third party may have in the info.

We note some of the submitted materials at issue may be protected by copyright. A custodian of public records must comply with the copyright law and is not required to furnish copies of records that are copyrighted. Open Records Decision No. 180 at 3 (1977). A governmental body must allow inspection of copyrighted materials unless an exception applies to the information. *Id.*; see Open Records Decision No. 109 (1975). If a member of the public wishes to make copies of copyrighted materials, the person must do so unassisted by the governmental body. In making copies, the member of the public assumes the duty of compliance with the copyright law and the risk of a copyright infringement suit. The district must release the submitted information; however, any information protected by copyright may only be released in accordance with copyright law.

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 <https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open-government/members-public/what-expect-after-ruling-issued> or call the OAG's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable charges for providing public information under the Public Information Act may be directed to the Cost Rules Administrator of the OAG, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,

Emily Kunst  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

EK/rm

Ref: ID# 834435

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)

2 Third Parties  
(w/o enclosures)