



**KEN PAXTON**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

April 13, 2022

Ms. Katheryne Ellison  
Assistant General Counsel  
Houston Independent School District  
4400 West 18th Street  
Houston, Texas 77092-8501

OR2022-10885

Dear Ms. Ellison:

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# 937219 (TPPF011222).

The Houston Independent School District (the "district") received a request for information related to expenditures made using proceeds from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act. You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.104 of the Government Code.<sup>1</sup> In addition, you state release of the submitted information may implicate the proprietary interests of Catapult Learning West, LLC ("Catapult"). Accordingly, you state, and provide documentation showing, you notified Catapult 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 received comments from Catapult. We have considered the submitted arguments and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.104(a) of the Government Code excepts from disclosure information that a governmental body demonstrates, if released, would "harm its interests by providing an advantage to a competitor or bidder in a particular ongoing competitive situation or in a

---

<sup>1</sup> Although you also raise sections 552.101 and 552.111 of the Government Code, you make no arguments to support these exceptions. Therefore, we assume you have withdrawn your claim that these sections apply to the submitted information. *See* Gov't Code §§ 552.301, .302.

particular competitive situation where the governmental body establishes the situation at issue is set to reoccur or there is a specific and demonstrable intent to enter into the competitive situation again in the future.” Gov’t Code § 552.104(a). The “test under section 552.104 is whether knowing another bidder’s [or competitor’s information] would be an advantage, not whether it would be a decisive advantage.” *Boeing Co. v. Paxton*, 466 S.W.3d 831, 841 (Tex. 2015). After review of the information at issue and consideration of the arguments, we find you have established the release of the submitted information would harm the district’s interests by providing an advantage to a competitor or bidder in a particular ongoing competitive situation. Thus, we conclude the district may withhold the submitted information under section 552.104(a) of the Government Code.<sup>2</sup>

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,

Erin Groff  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

EMG/mo

Ref: ID# 937219

c: Requestor

---

<sup>2</sup> As our ruling is dispositive, we need not address the remaining arguments against disclosure of the submitted information.