



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

November 4, 2022

Mr. W. Montgomery Meitler
Senior Counsel
Texas Education Agency
1701 North Congress Avenue
Austin, Texas 78701-1494

OR2022-34372

Dear Mr. Meitler:

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# 983473 (ORR# 55256).

The Texas Education Agency ("TEA") received a request for a letter pertaining to a specified incident. TEA claims the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.101 of the Government Code. We have considered the claimed exception 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. Section 552.101 encompasses section 39.004(e) of the Education Code which provides as follows:

(e) Unless otherwise provided by law, all evidence collected by [TEA] in connection with a special investigation, including witness statements and videos of agency interviews, are confidential and not subject to disclosure under [the Act], except that evidence described by this section may be disclosed:

- (1) to a person with a legitimate interest in the investigation; or
- (2) in connection with an administrative or other legal proceeding brought under this title.

Educ. Code § 39.004(e). TEA states the submitted information under section 39.004(e) was collected and prepared by its Division of Investigations in conjunction with a special investigation that was authorized by section 39.003(a) of the Education Code. *See id.* § 39.003 (listing circumstances in which the commissioner shall authorize investigations). Based on these representations, we find the information at issue constitutes evidence collected by TEA in connection with a special investigation. Accordingly, TEA must withhold the submitted information under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 39.004(e) of the Education 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 <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,

James L. Coggeshall
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

JLC/jxd

Ref: ID# 983473

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)