



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

GREG ABBOTT

April 23, 2009

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

OR2009-05390

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# 340727 (TEA PIR# 10734).

The Texas Education Agency (the "agency") received a request for a specified investigative report. You claim that the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.116 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.116 of the Government Code provides as follows:

- (a) An audit working paper of an audit of the state auditor or the auditor of a state agency, an institution of higher education as defined by Section 61.003, Education Code, a county, a municipality, a school district, or a joint board operating under Section 22.074, Transportation Code, including any audit relating to the criminal history background check of a public school employee, is excepted from the requirements of Section 552.021. If information in an audit working paper is also maintained

in another record, that other record is not excepted from the requirements of Section 552.021 by this section.

(b) In this section:

(1) "Audit" means an audit authorized or required by a statute of this state or the United States, the charter or an ordinance of a municipality, an order of the commissioners court of a county, a resolution or other action of a board of trustees of a school district, including an audit by the district relating to the criminal history background check of a public school employee, or a resolution or other action of a joint board described by Subsection (a) and includes an investigation.

(2) "Audit working paper" includes all information, documentary or otherwise, prepared or maintained in conducting an audit or preparing an audit report, including:

(A) intra-agency and interagency communications; and

(B) drafts of the audit report or portions of those drafts.

Gov't Code § 552.116. You state the submitted information consists of a draft report that has not been finalized, and that this information constitutes "audit working papers prepared or maintained by [the agency's] Division of Program Monitoring and Interventions." Furthermore, you explain the audit is authorized by section 39.075(a)(9) of the Education Code. *See* Educ. Code § 39.075(a)(9) (allowing special accreditation investigations to be conducted as the Commissioner determines necessary). Based on your representations and our review, we agree the submitted information constitutes audit working papers; thus, the agency may withhold the submitted information under section 552.116 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.oag.state.tx.us/open/index_orl.php, 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 must be directed to the Cost Rules Administrator of the Office of the Attorney General at (512) 475-2497.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Sterner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Chris" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Sterner".

Christopher D. Sterner
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

CDSA/eeg

Ref: ID# 340727

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)