



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

November 3, 2011

Mr. Jeffrey W. Harris
Technology Director
Weslaco Independent School District
P.O. Box 266
Weslaco, Texas 78599-0266

OR2011-16232

Dear Mr. Harris:

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# 435316.

The Weslaco Independent School District (the "district") received a request for the district's current contract with its emergency notification/mass messaging provider. Although you take no position as to whether the submitted information is excepted under the Act, you indicate release of this information may implicate the proprietary interests of Blackboard Connect, Inc. ("Blackboard Connect"). Accordingly, we understand you notified this company of the request for information and of the company's 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 have reviewed the submitted information.

We note that an interested third party is allowed ten business days after the date of its receipt of the governmental body's notice under section 552.305(d) to submit its reasons, if any, as to why information relating to that party should be withheld from public disclosure. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d)(2)(B). As of the date of this letter, Blackboard Connect has not submitted comments to this office explaining why the submitted information should not be released. Therefore, we have no basis to conclude that this company has a protected

proprietary interest in the submitted information. *See id.* § 552.110; Open Records Decision Nos. 661 at 5-6 (1999) (to prevent disclosure of commercial or financial information, party must show by specific factual evidence, not conclusory or generalized allegations, that release of requested information would cause that party substantial competitive harm), 552 at 5 (1990) (party must establish *prima facie* case that information is trade secret), 542 at 3. Accordingly, the district may not withhold any portion of the submitted information based upon the proprietary interests of Blackboard Connect. As no exceptions to disclosure are raised, the district must release the submitted information.

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, toll free at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Kenneth Leland Conyer
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

KLC/agn

Ref: ID# 435316

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

Blackboard Connect, Inc.
650 Massachusetts Avenue Northwest, 6th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20001-3796
(w/o enclosures)