



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

January 28, 2016

Ms. Leticia D. McGowan
School Attorney
Dallas Independent School District
3700 Ross Avenue, Box 74
Dallas, Texas 75204

OR2016-02144

Dear Ms. McGowan:

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# 595809.

The Dallas Independent School District (the "district") received a request for all submissions and score sheets for a specified request for proposal. You state the district will release the score sheets. Although you take no position as to whether the submitted information is excepted under the Act, you state release of this information may implicate the proprietary interests of Alvo Institute, L.L.C. ("Alvo"); Education Elements ("Elements"); and Two Revolutions, L.L.C. ("Revolutions"). Accordingly, you state, and provide documentation showing, you notified these third parties of the request for information and of their rights to submit arguments to this office as to why the information at issue 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 received comments from Elements. We have considered the submitted arguments and reviewed the submitted information.

Initially, we note 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, we have not received comments from any Alvo or Revolutions explaining why the submitted information should not be released. Therefore, we have no basis to conclude either of the third parties has protected proprietary interests 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 the submitted information on the basis of any proprietary interest Alvo or Revolutions may have in the information.

We understand Elements to raise section 552.104 of the Government Code for portions of its information. Section 552.104(a) excepts from disclosure “information that, if released, would give advantage to a competitor or bidder.” Gov’t Code § 552.104(a). A private third party may invoke this exception. *Boeing Co. v. Paxton*, 466 S.W.3d 831 (Tex. 2015). 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.” *Id.* at 841. Elements states it has competitors. In addition, Elements states release of five specified pages of its information would cause it substantial competitive harm in its marketplace. After review of the information at issue and consideration of the arguments, we find Elements has established the release of the information at issue would give advantage to a competitor or bidder. Thus, we conclude the district may withhold Elements’ information at issue, which we have marked, under section 552.104(a) of the Government Code.

The submitted documents also include information that is subject to section 552.136 of the Government Code.¹ Section 552.136 provides, “[n]otwithstanding any other provision of [the Act], a credit card, debit card, charge card, or access device number that is collected, assembled, or maintained by or for a governmental body is confidential.” Gov’t Code § 552.136(b); *see id.* § 552.136(a) (defining “access device”). This office has determined insurance policy numbers are access device numbers for purposes of section 552.136. *See* Open Records Decision No. 684 at 9 (2009). Accordingly, the district must withhold the insurance policy numbers in the remaining information under section 552.136 of the Government Code.

We note some of the 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

¹The Office of the Attorney General will raise a mandatory exception on behalf of a governmental body, but ordinarily will not raise other exceptions. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 481 (1987), 480 (1987), 470 (1987).

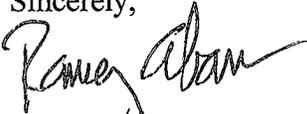
governmental body. In making copies, the member of the public assumes the duty of compliance with the copyright law and the risk of a copyright infringement suit.

In summary, the district may withhold the information we have marked under section 552.104 of the Government Code. The district must withhold the insurance policy numbers in the remaining information under section 552.136 of the Government Code. The remaining submitted information must 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 http://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open/orl_ruling_info.shtml, 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 may be directed to the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Ramsey Abarca
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

RAA/dls

Ref: ID# 595809

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

Ms. Rebecca Tomasini
Founder and Chief Executive Officer
Alvo Institute, L.L.C.
95 Rio Vista Avenue
Oakland, California 94611
(w/o enclosures)

Mr. Ben Politzer
Education Elements
999 Skyway Road, Suite 325
San Carlos, California 94070
(w/o enclosures)

Mr. Todd Kern
Founder and Principal
Two Revolutions, L.L.C.
77 Broadview Avenue
New Rochelle, New York 10804
(w/o enclosures)