

The need to protect student privacy and reject inBloom, Inc.

Karen Sprowal, PS 75 PTA and public school parent

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Good morning, my name is Karen Sprowal and I'm speaking with you today as a public school parent who is outraged about the backroom data deal the State Education Department made with inBloom Inc. to share my son's confidential student records with private vendors. In this deal all of our children's identifiable school records are going to be given to this private corporation funded by the Gates Foundation.

My son Matthew has Special Needs and requires a high level of supports in and outside of his school. It is important that I and his doctors partner closely with his teachers, the school nurse, principal, guidance counselor and other school staff to ensure that he thrives. Much of the information shared with his school requires a signed medical release under the medical protection laws of HIPPA. Like most young developing children, there's a great deal of sensitive data in his school records from grades k thru 5th, and if this information were misused or made public, it could cause serious harm for his prospects in life. NYSED has up-loaded these records, stored them in a data bank built by Wireless Generation run by the former schools chancellor Joel Klein

His identifiable records will be shared with 3rd parties and for-profit private companies, without parental consent or any notification of with whom they are sharing this information with! I can tell you this will profoundly change what information I share with his school. I'm his legal guardian, no one but me is supposed to decide what is shared about my child and with whom it's shared with. As his mother, I assess the risk and decide what's necessary to disclose to whom and for what purposes. These personalized learning technologies are only experimented with public education children. No private schools are signing up for this crap, so one needs to seriously question why.

My son's school has met the criteria to qualify for title1 funding for years now. However, due to the parents mistrust of the DOE, many qualifying parents refused to complete the annual lunch forms. We managed to persuade them to fill out these forms only after a huge outreach initiative led by PTA members, who reassured them that their sensitive family information would only be used for the school's title 1 assessment. That's now a LIE, this data will now be on a data cloud that will be run by Amazon.com who also is in this deal! This year will be our schools first year qualifying for much needed title1 funds. As more parents become aware of this inBloom Inc. deal, they will not come forth to disclose personal information. This will cost many of the neediest schools districts like mine millions in lost federal funding.

The same problems apply to Medicaid funding. The city has lost hundreds of millions of dollars in recent years because they haven't gotten reimbursed for special education services through Medicaid. Now parents will also be far more reluctant to sign these forms knowing the information may be shared widely and perhaps breached. NYSED has again completely marginalized the role of parents and has trampled on the rights of our children with this deal.

There have been no prior parental opt out provisions, notifications, consent forms, and no public hearings held. Commissioner King's response that there is no need for parental consent or opt out, this is not acceptable! Recent FERPA changes created the loopholes used to hatch this scheme, hopefully not for the intent to sell our kids confidential school records to for-profit corporations, because they are not for SALE! As five states have pulled out of inBloom, and more are reconsidering, New York is the only state still moving forward with sharing data for all its public school students, despite parental outrage and the serious security risks involved with cloud data storage.

I urge you to pass this resolution and urge the Legislature to pass bill A.6059A that would block re-disclosures without parental consent, and A.7872A to give parents the right to opt out of data sharing with third parties. Identical versions to these bills have been introduced in the State Senate, S. 5930 and S. 5932. This

awful deal has nothing to do with "personalized education." but yet another very lucrative pay day for profit corporations, and to benefit Joel Klein, Gates, Murdoch and many other companies.

Thank you!