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**Class Size Matters**

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**Short FAQ on inBloom Inc.**

**What is inBloom Inc.?** inBloom Inc. is a non-profit corporation, funded by the Gates and Carnegie Foundations with $100 million, created to collect personally identifiable student and teacher data from states and districts and share it with vendors. The data is being stored on a cloud run by Amazon.com, with an operating system created by Wireless/Amplify, a subsidiary of News Corporation, owned by Rupert Murdoch. inBloom is planning to commercialize this data, with the agreement of states and districts, by offering it up to for-profit companies. All this is being done without parental notification or consent.

**What is the status of the program in New York?** According to NYSED, they have agreed to delay uploading more personally identifiable data to inBloom for an unspecified period, though they already uploaded some data in December 2012 and again in August or September 2013. The original plan was for most districts to sign up for an “Education Data portal” (euphemistically called [EngageNY portal](http://usny.nysed.gov/rttt/data/enyp.html)), or a “data dashboard” that would pull data from the inBloom cloud. The three companies with contracts to receive personal student data for these dashboards were ConnectEDU (subcontractor CaseNex/Datacation), eScholar and NCS Pearson/Schoolnet. The NYSED [fact sheet](http://usny.nysed.gov/rttt/data/edp-memo.pdf) originally reported that these dashboards would be available for the school year 2013-2014.

**What data is being shared with inBloom?**  inBloom Inc. was planning to collect more 400 student and teacher data points, going back as far as 2006. Many of these data points are highly sensitive and controversial. (A full list is posted [here](http://www.classsizematters.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/full-data-elements-to-be-uploaded-into-inBloom.pdf); and an excerpt is posted [here](http://www.classsizematters.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/inBloom-Data-Fields-excerpts.pdf).) New York State officials have said they are going to share student names, test scores, home addresses, grades, disciplinary and attendance data, economic and racial and disability status, and “program participation”, including “*whether or not a student is entitled to special education, 504 indicator, English Language Learner educational services and accommodations*.” A list of mandatory data elements [is here](http://usny.nysed.gov/rttt/data/engageny-portal-data-dictionary.pdf). At the same time, the state is also encouraging districts to upload even more personal student data into the inBloom cloud, and to sign up with more vendors who will provide “interoperable” learning products and be able to access this information remotely.

**What is being done about this?** There are several bills that have been introduced in the Legislature to block inBloom and to data-sharing with vendors without parental consent. The most comprehensive bill is Senate bill [S 5932](http://open.nysenate.gov/legislation/bill/S5932-2013), at http://open.nysenate.gov/legislation/bill/S5932-2013 which was passed unanimously by the Assembly last session. Please ask your legislators to support this bill.

***Prepared by Leonie Haimson, Class Size Matters, 2/16/2014***