



inBloom Summary

May 13, 2013

inBloom (www.inbloom.org) is a nonprofit organization aimed at creating a system by which educators can develop unique learning opportunities for all students. Their work is focused on providing a data store, common data standards, and a shared platform that will improve the effectiveness, variety and affordability of technology-based applications that link student needs and available resources to meet those needs.

Who is paying for it?

The inBloom initiative was initially funded by the Gates Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation. inBloom is now a not-for-profit organization with its own board of directors. Colorado is one of nine states and ten pilot school districts involved in the development of a learning system which aligns with our vision for Education 3.0. Jefferson County Public Schools is our state's pilot district in this effort. After the pilot phase, inBloom will require an annual subscription fee; the exact amount is not yet determined. Districts will bear this cost.

Why is it needed?

Every student has different learning styles and abilities. Therefore, it is a priority to provide student instruction that is uniquely targeted to individual students. Using existing technology-enabled tools and applications, this process is time-consuming and cumbersome for most all teachers, requiring multiple user sign-ons, involving proprietary software, and resulting in disparate technology solutions that are incompatible with each other. By creating a shared data store, shared data standards (that enable system capability), and a common platform, inBloom will enable the delivery of a better, more integrated technology and data analytics solution that will help districts, schools, and teachers create a complete picture of the student, making it easier to find learning materials that match each student's needs and learning style.

How will it help teachers?

The inBloom platform will enable teachers to more easily and effectively access in one place the school or district applications designed to help students achieve their learning goals. The inBloom platform will aid in customizing learning for students no matter what their ability or learning style. For example, if a student is having trouble understanding a math concept, a teacher using applications on the inBloom platform would be able to access a virtual dashboard of resources that immediately gives the teacher a variety of options to teach that concept based on that child's learning style and ability. Using today's technology and resources, it would consume precious time for the teacher to research the most effective resources available.

How will this benefit schools and students?

To successfully enter the world of Education 3.0, we face a need for faster access to student educational records and resources from multiple systems. Right now we rely on a variety of technology tools to do this and the cost of connecting those is very high. inBloom would provide schools and districts their own *protected* data storage space that lowers the cost of integrating all of their student systems. Less money would be spent on data integration which means more money spent in the classroom.

Would this involve sharing student information with outside vendors?

First and foremost, student data privacy is a top priority for CDE, our school districts and inBloom. inBloom services are fully compliant with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act or FERPA.

It's also worth noting that inBloom – through agreements with participating states and districts and through a strong data privacy and security policy – has adopted data privacy and security protections that exceed FERPA requirements and are designed to ensure that student data are used only for agreed-upon education purposes and not further disclosed.

Access to student educational records will be limited and strictly controlled. School districts may disclose personal information from student records to private contractors that perform services for the districts on the same basis as to their own employees (which is current practice). Student information will not be sold, publicly disclosed or used for commercial profit.

Is inBloom creating a national database?

inBloom is **not** creating a national database. Our districts have their own protected data storage space and they will continue to own, manage and control access to the data just as they do now.

Who will have access to the data?

Commercial vendors (such as Infinite Campus, SchoolMessenger, etc.) will contract and work with a district as they normally do now to access student educational records. The district will continue to control who has access to the data and will have strict control over how the data is used by any commercial vendor. Vendors are prohibited from sharing the student information and only get the information if they agree in writing to keep it confidential.

Student information will not be sold, publicly disclosed or used for commercial profit. Student data will never become the property of inBloom or any of its funders or affiliates including the Gates Foundation and Wireless Generation.

What kind of student information will be stored in inBloom?

Educational records that will be stored in inBloom include data that *is currently collected for instruction as determined by a particular school district*, such as assessment data and grades, as well as data that is reported to CDE. CDE has never collected and will not initiate to collect student Social Security numbers.

What is the timeline for implementing inBloom?

The planned implementation for our one pilot district, Jefferson County Public Schools, is fall of 2014.