

# **Blackboard Learn 9.1 SP13 Upgrade**

## **Talking Points**

**Developed by:  
Federal Aviation Administration  
Learning Services**

# **Blackboard Learn**

## **Purpose of this Document**

At the same time eLMS is being upgraded to b1408, Blackboard Learn (Blackboard) will also be upgraded. These talking points serve as a high-level summary of the Blackboard 9.1 Service Pack (SP) 8 to SP 13 upgrade. These points address the new features available to users once the upgrade is complete. These points are not intended to be read word-for-word; they should serve merely as a place to start as you frame your communication with users.

# Blackboard Learn

## eLMS b1408 and Blackboard Learn 9.1 SP13 Upgrade

### Basics

- **Explain:** eLMS is the gateway at FAA to professional development and continuous learning.
- **Add:** Blackboard is another important source of professional development and continuous learning at FAA.
- **Explain:** Blackboard is accessed through eLMS To Do List for Learners and Easy Links for other users.
- **Say:** FAA Learning Services is pleased to announce that both eLMS and Blackboard will be upgraded in May 2015.
- **Remind:** Email notices will be sent to Blackboard-affected Instructors, Stakeholders and the Blackboard project team only, before, during, and after the upgrade process.
- **Remind:** After a few days of downtime, you'll return to an eLMS and Blackboard with improved functionality, fewer bugs, and new features.

### Outages

- **Explain:** There are two planned shutdown periods in eLMS/Blackboard that will affect anyone using Blackboard: one in Staging and one in Production. Staging will go down on Thursday, February 26.
- **Say:** When eLMS staging or production is down, Blackboard staging or production will also be down.
- **Say:** Please check the eLMS Splash Page (<https://elms.faa.gov/>) regularly and watch for specific eLMS/Blackboard downtime.
- **Remind:** The benefits of the upgrade will outweigh any inconvenience of the shutdown.

### New Navigation Features for All Users

- **Say:** There are several improvements being made that will make it easier for users to find exactly what they need.
- **Say:** New features available are the Global Navigation Menu, Quick Links, and updated Calendar.
- **Explain:** If a user requests additional information on the new features:

#### Global Navigation Menu

- New application user main menu and entry point to My Blackboard features.
- Provides users access to courses, organizations, settings, Blackboard Help and My Blackboard tools.
- The user menu provides access to settings that previously were accessed through My Places. (My Places has been eliminated.) Home and Help links now reside here.
- My Blackboard provides icons and links to various areas of Blackboard. The icons signal the presence of new information, such as new messages and new posts.

---

#### Quick Links

- This is a new navigation efficiency tool.

## Blackboard Learn

- Users can quickly locate any heading or section within any page in the Blackboard Learn application and jump directly to it. (Note: For sighted keyboard only.)
- Located in the top left, the Quick Links icon opens a pop-up window that displays the landmark and navigation links on the page. Any available keyboard shortcuts for the page are also displayed.

---

### Calendar

- The calendar design and usability are updated and enhanced.
- Users can personalize and customize the calendar in courses/organizations and on My Blackboard. Users can select views (e.g., month, week, or day) and color-code events of different courses and personal items. Items with due dates automatically appear and are updated automatically.

## New My Blackboard Features for All Users

- **Say:** My Blackboard is the central location for all users to access Course, Organization, Tools, and Social Learning Interactions.
- **Say:** New features include Home, Profile, Posts, Updates, Calendar, and My Grades.
- **Explain:** If a user requests additional information on some of the new features:

### Home

- Single location for access to course/organization information and user tools.
- This page displays highlights of what is new since the user last accessed Blackboard.

---

### Profile Card

- User profiles are automatically created for users with the default privacy setting set to Private.
- The Profile Card displays a name and about me information.

---

### Posts

- Single location for access to all courses/organizations posts.
- Displays recent post contributions to discussion boards, blogs, wikis, and journals in the courses/organizations in which the user is enrolled.

---

### Updates

- Single location for access to all courses/organizations notifications.
- Displays the notifications of what is happening in all users' courses/organizations.

---

### Calendar

- Single location for all courses/organizations, institution, and personal calendar events.
- Users can view the events from all of their courses, organizations, and from personal calendar on this page

---

### My Grades

- Single location for access to all courses/organizations grades.
- Learners can view the grades from all of their courses on this page.

## New Technical Features for All Users

## Blackboard Learn

- **Say:** This Blackboard upgrade includes improvements to technical features that will enhance the user experience.
- **Say:** New features are Content Editor, Accessibility, Mobile Browser Support, and Progress Tracker.
- **Explain:** If a user requests additional information on the new features:

### Content Editor

- A new platform-independent WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) editor.
- Enables simple content creation through an easy-to-use interface.
- Reads, writes, and renders modern HTML.
- Allows for image resizing.
- Allows for mashups from YouTube, Flickr, Slideshare, and more.
- Expands for full-frame editing.
- Includes a math editor.

---

### WCAG 2.0 WAI-AA Conformance (Accessibility)

- Deque Systems issued Blackboard a 508-conformance statement: Blackboard Learn is in conformance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.

---

### Mobile Browser Support for Mashups

- Allow mashup content to play on mobile devices via a web browser.

---

### Progress Tracker

- Users are provided with a visible indicator for processes that take place in the background (i.e., uploading a file) in order to let users know a process is taking place and when it is complete.

## New Technical Features for Learners

- **Say:** In addition to the technical features that all users will enjoy, there are some additional technical features for Learners.
- **Say:** New features available are Discussion and Content Editor.
- **Explain:** If a user requests additional information on the new features:

### Discussion

- Discussion Board has been updated in two primary ways.
- The Thread Detail page was redesigned while maintaining previous functionality.
- A new Post First setting requires Learners to post to a Forum before they can see other posts to that Forum.

---

### Content Editor – WIRIS Update

- Updated math editor so Java Virtual Machine dependency is eliminated.
- New WIRIS Editor based on JavaScript, which removes dependency on JVM. It enables full math-editing capabilities on all platforms capable of running a JavaScript-enabled browser. This improves accessibility.

# Blackboard Learn

## New Test Tool Features for Instructors

- **Say:** Instructors will have access to helpful new testing tools with the updates to Blackboard.
- **Say:** New features available are Item Analysis, Fill-in-the-blank assessment, Test Enhancements, and Test Access log.
- **Explain:** If a user requests additional information on the new features:

### Item Analysis

- An analysis of overall test performance and on individual test questions.
- This data helps the instructor recognize questions that might not adequately discriminate between learners who understand the material and those who do not

---

### Fill-in-the-Blank Question Enhancement

- Instructors can use contains and pattern match logic when grading Fill-in-the-Blank questions.

---

### Test Enhancements

- Modifications to how tests are designed and deployed.
- Test tools now provide more granular feedback control; group and user deployment exceptions; Test “Begin” page enhancement; improved user interface of the Test Canvas and Create/Edit pages; and improved handling of submissions.

---

### Test Access Log

- Detailed Learner Test attempt activity log.
- Instructor is provided with detailed information on Learner test attempt interactions, such as Test start verification and network/internet problems during Test.
- Access log shows a detailed list of every interaction the Learner engages in when taking a Test.

## New Technical Features for Instructors

- **Say:** In addition to the technical features that all users will enjoy, there are some additional technical features for learners.
- **Say:** New features are Retention Center, Discussion, Inline Assignment Grading, Content Editor, and Common Cartridge 1.2.
- **Explain:** If a user requests additional information on the new features:

### Common Cartridge 1.2

- Allows user to package course in reusable format for use across multiple learning management systems.
- Standards Alignment is a new option that allows inclusion of alignment to Standards within Common Cartridge package.
- Web content can now be marked as assignment and assignment is now supported both in export and import.

---

### Retention Center

- Data visualization and preconfigured rules for identifying at-risk Learners in a course.

# Blackboard Learn

- No setup required to automatically inform Instructor of Learners who may need attention. Preconfigured rules are easy to modify in order for each Instructor to tailor as needed.

---

## Discussion

- Discussion Board has been updated in two primary ways.
- The Thread Detail page was redesigned while maintaining previous functionality.
- A new Post First setting requires Learners to post to a Forum before they can see other posts to that Forum.

---

## Inline Assignment Grading

- A gradebook enhancement so instructors can view a submitted Assignment document inside the web browser.
- Supported document types are MS Word .doc and .docx; MS PowerPoint .ppt and .pptx; MS Excel .xls and .xlsx; and Adobe .pdf.

---

## Content Editor – WIRIS Update

- Updated math editor so Java Virtual Machine dependency is eliminated.
- New WIRIS Editor based on JavaScript, which removes dependency on JVM. It enables full math-editing capabilities on all platforms capable of running a JavaScript-enabled browser. This improves accessibility.