An Impact on Inclusive Eduction Across the Buckeye State

Colleges and universities throughout the state of Ohio serve a diverse population of students with a variety of learning needs and abilities. More accessible digital course content delivered in a variety of file formats helps ensure students have access to learning materials that work better with assistive technologies, mobile devices, and study tools. Blackboard Ally integrates into four major Learning Management Systems (LMS) to help institutions address accessibility barriers with course content, increase instructor awareness about accessible content authoring, and improve how students engage with their course materials.

Institutional Report

View overall accessibility trends in the LMS over time. Focus at the issue level or course level for strategic planning and benchmarking. Analyze detailed usage data of Ally tools

Alternative Formats

Machine learning algorithms automatically generate eight unique file formats from the instructor original. Improve accessibility and usability of course files for all students. Increase learner flexibility and options for engagement

Instructor Feedback

Accessibility indicators next to course files raise awareness and prompt engagement. Guidance helps faculty address issues and develop authoring skills. Course Accessibility Report provides actionable insights to faculty.

Ally Adoption in Ohio

22 Colleges and Universities currently using Ally in the LMS

211,988 Students benefiting from Ally (based on full-time enrollment)

2,263,235 Files checked for accessibility in Fall 2019 courses

2,439,929 HTML items checked for accessibility in Fall 2019 courses

292,951 Alternative Formats downloaded through Ally in one year

11,042 Files improved through the Instructor Feedback in one year

Institutional Report Data

The "Overall Files Score" in the table represents the average accessibility scores of files (PDFs, Word, PowerPoint, Images) in Fall 2019 LMS courses. For the four accessibility issues listed, the table includes the average number of files affected by the issue, and the percentage of files with the issue out of the total number of files that could be affected by the issue in Fall 2019 courses.

Accessibility numbers in Ohio reflect national averages. Given the volume of files with critical issues, require a scalable, data-informed approach to address. The **Institutional Report** allows administrators and campus leaders to proactively identify problem areas, allocate resources strategically, collaborate across various campus units such as the library, and benchmark progress on key issues and courses.

Alternative Formats Usage

While all 22 institutions have yet to enable the Alternative Formats in all courses, since the start of 2020, an average of **3,917 students have downloaded 2.6 formats per week**. With **1.0 downloads per FTE,** usage rates reveal widespread adoption across campus. The different formats downloaded highlight several important use cases. Low-income students accessing content on devices without MS Office or who need a smaller file size can download a **Tagged PDF** format, while those who rely on mobile devices can download their files in a responsive **HTML format**. The **ePub and BeeLine** reader formats can help students with dyslexia and focus challenges read more effectively. The **MP3** format allows students to review content on-the-go, while pairing the MP3 with text can support English Language Learners and students with processing challenges.

Instructor Feedback Usage

In the last 15 months, **32% of indicator clicks** resulted in an attempt to fix the file through the Instructor Feedback, and **83% of attempted fixes resulted in an increased score,** contributing to **accessibility improvements across 2,581 courses**. Consistent with national data, images were the most commonly fixed file type (57% of all files fixed in Ohio). Images were followed by PDF (29%), Word Docs (9%), and Presentations (5%).

Providing instructors with feedback and guidance within their course workflow on accessible content authoring helps institutions scale professional development and make a sustainable impact on inclusive education.
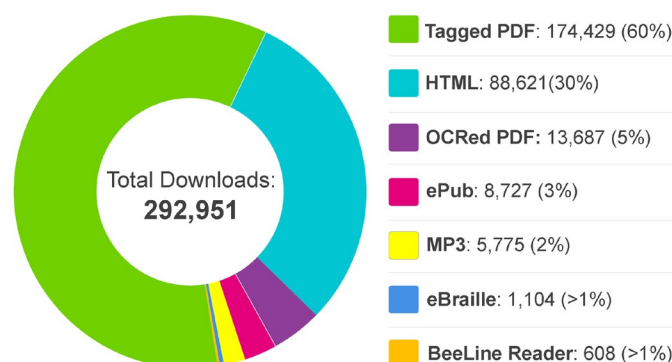
Avg. Accessibility Scores and Critical Issues: Fall 2019

File Score and Issues	Small	Medium	Large
Overall Files Score	**51.6%**	**48.9%**	**48.5%**
Scanned PDFs (% of Total PDFs)	1,807 (16%)	4,574 (17%)	16,966 (18%)
Untagged PDFs (% of Total PDFs)	3,725 (37%)	11,437 (40%)	33,291 (44%)
Docs Missing Headings (% of Total Docs)	6,810 (24%)	18,290 (30%)	48,466 (29%)
Images Missing Description (% of Total Images)	4,972 (81%)	7,044 (81%)	38,885 (68%)

Small = 1,500 - 4,900 FTE (9 institutions); Medium = 5,000 - 14,900 FTE (8); Large = 14,950 -35,000 FTE (5)

Alternative Format Downloads by Type: 12 months

*BeeLine Reader was available in a limited number of courses

Total Downloads: 292,951

- **Tagged PDF**: 174,429 (60%)
- **HTML**: 88,621(30%)
- **OCRed PDF**: 13,687 (5%)
- **ePub**: 8,727 (3%)
- **MP3**: 5,775 (2%)
- **eBraille**: 1,104 (>1%)
- **BeeLine Reader**: 608 (>1%)

Files Altered and Improved by File Type: 15 Months

"Files altered and improved" are limited to files uploaded through Ally. Additional fixes may be made directly through the LMS. Parentheses refers to the percentage of files altered that resulted in an improved score

Legend: ■ Files Improved ■ Files Altered

	Images	PDFs	Word Docs	Presentations
Files Altered	10,363 (87%)	5,396 (83%)	2,112 (68%)	1,077 (78%)
Files Improved	8,978	4,499	1,433	845