

Ally Office Hours

August 10th, 2026

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Director of Product

Dr. Katie Grennell
Product Engagement Manager



Forward Looking Statement

Statements regarding our product development initiatives, including new products and future product upgrades, updates, or enhancements, represent our current intentions but may be modified, delayed, or abandoned without prior notice. There is no assurance that such offerings, upgrades, updates, or functionality will become available unless and until they have been made generally available to our customers.



About Office Hours



- Facilitated by the Product managers and wider Ally team.
- Includes discussion of latest feature releases, product developments, and emerging current issues.
- Opportunity to provide feedback and ask questions of the Ally Product Management team and fellow clients.
- Slide deck and recording will be shared after the meeting.
- Closed captioning is available on today's webinar (via Microsoft Teams).
- Based on our AI Trustworthy Framework, the use of third-party AI generator software for notetaking or recording of this session requires consent from all webinar attendees and prior approval from Blackboard.

Agenda



01 Welcome, Announcements, & Events

02 Release Updates

03 Group Discussion – How do you describe “accessible content”?

04 Q&A with Chris & Katie

Announcements

Upcoming Ally Maintenance Periods



Database Upgrades Saturday - August 8, 2026

- We will be doing a planned database upgrade that will result in some downtime starting at 8AM EDT.

Complete!

Reporting API Token Refresh – Friday August 14, 2026

- We will be doing a separate maintenance period to refresh all Reporting API tokens as part of planned security improvements, including shortening the expiration period.
- Updates can be tracked via the status board:
<https://status.blackboard.com/>

Reporting API Token Reset

How do I know if this impacts me?

- If you are not using the Ally Reporting APIs to include your Ally data in tools like Power BI, etc. – this will not impact you.
- If you are using the API in those analytics tools, you will have to regenerate a new token on Friday using the same original setup steps to generate a token. More information can be found here: <https://help.anthology.com/ally-lms/en/administrators/integrate-ally-s-api-with-an-external-reporting-tool.html>

↓ Export ▼

Connect data to external Reporting tools ✕

Create custom up-to-date reports with Ally's Report data. Use Ally's API endpoints to connect live data with external reporting tools.

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Copy token

You'll need this API token, alongside the 'Endpoint URL' found in the [Setup instructions](#).

New Content

Ally Product Pulse



- Monthly roundup of Ally-related news and content, including new feature releases, recently published content, upcoming events, and a “Did You Know?” highlight.
- [Ally Product Pulse-August Edition](#)

PRODUCT NEWS July 29, 2026

Ally Product Pulse

Accessibility # Ally

August Edition

 [Katie Grennell, PhD](#)



Ally Product Pulse: August Edition 🌻

Last month, I shared my goal of creating a “90s summer” for my kids. What I’ve learned is that a 90s summer is a lot less spontaneous when you’re the adult making it happen. At least the planning has improved our frozen treat game. Maybe a true 90s summer is something to aspire to next year!

That same planning energy paid off at work. After months of preparation, Building Blackboard Together took place July 13–15, bringing together educators, accessibility advocates, administrators, and community members for three energizing days of learning, collaboration, and conversation. More than just an event, BbT was a true fill-your-cup experience, creating space to connect, reflect, and return to our work energized by the passion and commitment of the Blackboard community. From an Ally perspective, it was especially meaningful to showcase recent enhancements, share what’s ahead, and connect with our community members whose insights continue to inspire and inform our work.

Inside this month's edition:

- Topic spotlight: Building Blackboard Together Recap
- New Engagement Series: Ally in Practice

Table Of Contents

[Ally Product Pulse: August Edition](#) >



**Got an idea?
Let's make it happen.**

Share your voice,
shape the future of
Blackboard solutions.

[Submit your idea](#)

“That’s Not My Job”: Navigating Instructor Pushback on Accessibility

- Based on my BbT presentation, this blog explores instructor pushback on accessibility and effective approaches for turning resistance into progress.
- [**"That's Not My Job": Navigating Instructor Pushback on Accessibility Blog Post**](#)



Looking Ahead: Highlights from the Ally Roadmap Session at Building Blackboard Together

- We transformed our Ally Roadmap conference session into a blog post, sharing highlights across three focus areas:
 - PDF accessibility
 - reporting and insights
 - personalized learner experiences
- [Looking Ahead: Highlights from the Ally Roadmap Session at Building Blackboard Together Blog Post](#)



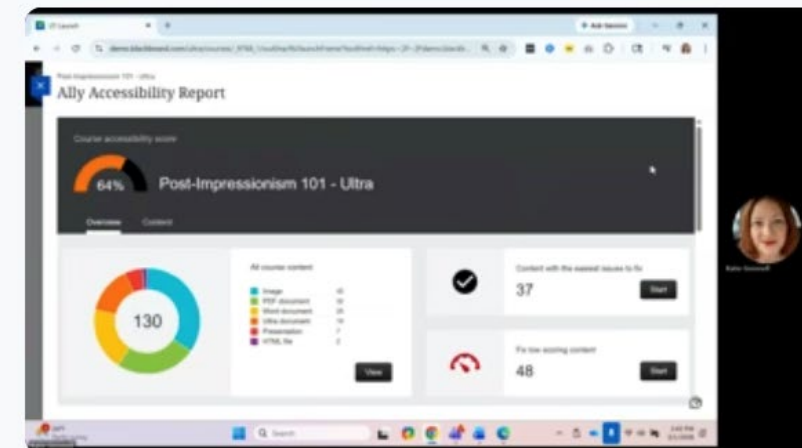
Ally for Instructors: Microlearning Video Series

- New video series focused on helping faculty build practical, confidence-boosting accessibility skills with Ally.
- Real-world examples instructors can apply immediately
- New video on PDF Accessibility Challenges for Instructors & Learners
- [Ally for Instructors Microlearning Video Series](https://vimeo.com/showcase/AllyForInstructorsMicrolearningVideoSeries?video=1187100489)

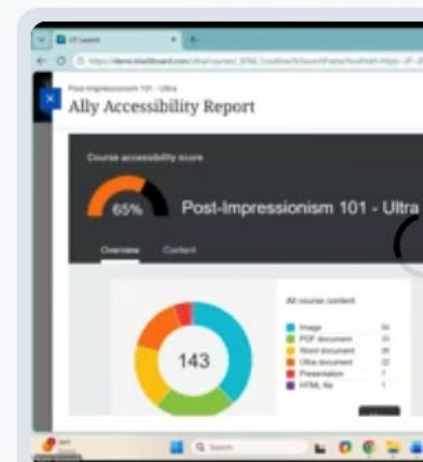
Ally for Instructors: Microlearning for Accessible Teaching

Ally for Instructors is a microlearning video series designed to help faculty quickly build confidence and practical skill in creating accessible, inclusive course materials. Each concise episode focu... more

3 videos



Bb Getting Started with Accessibility using Ally's Course Accessibility Report



Bb Strategically Prioritizing Accessibility

Blackboard

Coming Soon: Updates to the Communication & Adoption Toolkit

We're expanding the toolkit with new resources! Planned additions include:

- Instructor tips & tricks
- Back-to-school accessibility resources
- Alternative Formats Promotion Resources

 Have an idea for content you'd like included? Please share it with us!

Students >	Communication and Adoption Toolkit  Updated on 2026-06-11 This toolkit is designed to support institutions and organizations in maximizing the benefits of Ally by increasing adoption. This comprehensive collection of resources provides tangible strategies, practical guidance, and ready-to-use materials to drive awareness, engagement, and adoption of Ally within your institution or organization. The content is organized by topic and is intended for all Ally users, including students, instructors, and administrators. This version of the toolkit emphasizes strategic planning and communication. For instructional guidance or how-to resources, please visit the main Ally Help Site. Who is the toolkit for?  Primarily designed for administrators, this toolkit supports institutional efforts to enhance accessibility by guiding both instructors and students in using Ally effectively. It also serves as a direct resource for instructors and students, offering practical guidance on using Ally to enhance accessibility in teaching and learning. See below for sampling of available resources per user role: administrator, instructor, student. For administrators, the toolkit includes: • An overarching Ally adoption strategy framework • Communication guidance and templates • Insights into advanced Ally features • Case studies showcasing how other institutions have adopted Ally For instructors, the toolkit provides: • Strategies to promote Ally's alternative formats to students
Instructors >	
Administrators ✓	
What's New >	
Accessibility Checklist	
Integrate Ally's API with an External Reporting Tool	
Reporting API Endpoints	
Ally Institution Report >	
Course Accessibility Report >	
AI Alt Text Assistant	
Communication and Adoption Toolkit ✓	
Positioning Ally	
Administrator Adoption Strategy >	
Faculty Adoption >	
Communication >	
Resources >	
Administrator FAQs	
Submit Ally Support Cases	
Configure Ally >	

[Ally Communication & Adoption Toolkit](#)



Your Ally Story Deserves to Be Heard!



We're looking for Ally users outside of Blackboard LMS to share how they've made accessibility a priority at their institution — and inspire others to do the same.

We want to hear from you if you're using Ally with:

Canvas · D2L Brightspace · Moodle · and more

What makes a great story?

- How you got started with Ally
- Challenges you've tackled along the way
- Wins — big or small — for students and staff
- What you'd tell another institution just getting started

Interested in sharing your story?

Raise your hand and come on mic
or

Drop your email in the chat and we'll follow up

Questions? Reach out at
community@blackboard.com

Ally User Group-Meeting Schedule TBD

We're currently updating the Ally User Group meeting calendar. More information and upcoming dates will be shared soon.



Upcoming Events

Ally Roadmap Webinar

Having FOMO about missing BbT's Ally roadmap session?

Fear not! A repeat is scheduled for:

- **Tuesday, August 18th** @ 10:00 am EST

To register, visit:

<https://connect.blackboard.com/blackboard-ally-roadmap>



New Enablement Series: Ally in Practice



New engagement series of virtual, audience-focused sessions designed to help instructors, faculty, and administrators make the most of Ally and advance their accessibility goals.

First Session - Ally in Practice: Prioritizing Accessibility Improvements for Instructors

- Date: September 16th, 2026
- Time: 10:00-11:00 AM ET or 2:00-3:00 PM ET
- Audience: Instructors & Faculty
- Register here for [option 1](#) or [option 2](#)



Recent Releases for Ally

Recent Releases

Features/Enhancements

- Blackboard HTML content blocks as viewable content in Instructor Feedback Preview (**2.19.2**)
- New Usage Report (**2.19**)
- PDF Tagging (**2.19**)

Bug Fix Highlights

- Moodle HTML content unavailable when the option to Exclude unused files in the Ally plugins selected (**2.19.3**)
- New Ally Usage Report that caused downloads to timeout unexpectedly when selecting a longer date range (**2.19.2**)
- Increased timeout limit for the Ally Reporting API to avoid 500 errors (**2.19.1**)

Other Updates

- Moodle 5.2 Plugins available (**2.19.3**)



Group Discussion



How do you describe "accessible content" to faculty, students, or staff in a way that resonates and helps them understand why it matters?

Q&A

Connect with Us!



Ally User Group Meetings

- Join one of our International Ally User Group meetings.
- This group meets on the 3rd Thursday every other month.
- <https://community.blackboard.com/home/clubs/ally-user-group>

Ally User Group Community

- Engage in the Ally User Group Community:
- <https://community.blackboard.com/home/clubs/ally-user-group>

Idea Exchange

- Share Your Product Ideas!
- <https://www.blackboard.com/idea-exchange>



Thank You,

for all you do every day to help create more
accessible content for all students.

