

**STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES**  
**Contract for Learning Management System, Online Helpdesk, Video Conferencing, and**  
**Software as a Service Hosting**  
**FY 2019-20**

**Request:** The State Board of Community Colleges is asked to approve a contract with Blackboard, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$1,458,522 for licenses for the System Office and 18 community colleges for the Blackboard® Learn Learning Management System (LMS); system-wide Blackboard Student Services online helpdesk; Blackboard Collaborate for the System Office, and Software as a Service (SaaS) hosting for the System Office and Virtual Learning Community (VLC); for the period July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020.

**Strategic Plan Reference:**

Theme: Student Interest and Access

Goal 3: Identify and reduce access barriers for all prospective students, particularly among underserved populations.

- Objective 2: Promote more flexible scheduling and instructional delivery formats to reach non-traditional students.

**Background:** In March 2010, the System Office started supporting two learning management systems for the 58 community colleges: Blackboard Learn, a licensed LMS, and Moodle®, an open source LMS. Blackboard is providing Moodle SaaS Hosting to 30 colleges in the NCCC System. Each community college chooses the LMS that best suits the needs of that college and the learning community it serves. The System Office negotiates the contracts for the LMSs and provides support services through training and information resources of the Virtual Learning Community and the North Carolina Learning Object Repository.

Blackboard Student Services online helpdesk services have been provided for the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) colleges by the System Office since 2006. Blackboard Student Services provides 24/7/365 technical end user support for the Blackboard Learn, Moodle® and Sakai® LMSs. Blackboard Student Services Contact Center Solutions include Support Portal and Knowledge Base, with real time e-Chat, and toll-free phone support. Colleges use the online helpdesk for technical questions and problem resolution related to LMS and learning technologies, login assistance, student enrollment, and related technical issues.

Blackboard offers a fully hosted, web-based knowledge base designed to encourage self-service and empower users to maximize the value of their teaching and learning environment. One fully customized support service desk has been implemented for each of the community colleges utilizing the Blackboard Student Support Services for LMS.

Blackboard Collaborate is a video conferencing software platform used by the System Office for remote training, meetings, and troubleshooting for the 58 community colleges. The use of

remote sessions have greatly reduced travel costs associated with training delivery of the Computer Information Systems (CIS) curricula to the community college staff. Additionally, Blackboard Collaborate provides 50GB of MP4 recorded sessions/training sessions.

The System Office Blackboard hosting contract supports an environment for course development for the Virtual Learning Community (VLC), as well as other curriculum improvement projects (CIP) and other program alignment projects. The VLC library of courses are hosted on the current server. Community colleges download these courses for use at their schools.

In spring 2018, the Blackboard contract was amended to include SaaS hosting for the System Office and VLC Blackboard Learn instance. This addition allowed the System Office to move course content from an on-premise server to the cloud which allows for greater reliability, accessibility, higher standards of performance and security, and a reduction in the administrative overhead to maintain the current server infrastructure.

**Rationale for Contract:** This contract is a system-wide master term contract negotiated by NCCCS office personnel to realize cost savings for all colleges using Blackboard LMS products and services. Flexibility has been added to this contract to allow for the addition/deletion of colleges from the master contract at the time of each annual renewal. An annual survey each spring of the colleges determines which colleges require a Blackboard license for the following fiscal year.

The NCCCS Office and the following institutions electing to use Blackboard Learn in this contract include:

Beaufort Community College  
Cape Fear Community College  
Catawba Valley Community College  
Central Carolina Community College  
Central Piedmont Community College  
Cleveland Community College  
Coastal Carolina Community College  
Fayetteville Technical Community College  
Forsyth Technical Community College  
Gaston College  
Halifax Community College  
Johnston Community College  
Martin Community College  
McDowell Technical Community College  
Montgomery Community College  
Piedmont Community College  
Rowan-Cabarrus Community College  
Wake Technical Community College

**Method of Procurement:** In accordance with the procurement practice of the State of North Carolina, approval is being sought by outside purchasing authorities. Approval of the contract by the State Board is contingent upon approval by the State Department of Information Technology Contracts and Strategic Sourcing.

**Contract Amount and Time Period:** The contract period will be from July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2020 for an amount not to exceed \$1,458,522.

**Fund Source and Availability:** Funding is contingent on FY 2019-20 State General Fund appropriation.

**Contact:**

James Parker  
Senior Vice President and Chief Information Officer  
Technology Solutions and Distance Learning

Katherine Davis  
Director of Distance Learning and Change Management  
Technology Solutions and Distance Learning