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General

What are the benefits of the new hosting environment?

Here are some important benefits:

- Storage level encryption: Encryption for “Data at rest”
- HTTPS encryption
- Additional levels of redundancy
 - File redundancy
 - SQL (database) redundancy
 - Location-based redundancy
 - Private individual load balancers. (Individual sites not impacted by other site’s activity)
- Rock-solid stability: Take advantage of over 99% uptime (100% during back to school for 3 years and running) for increased peace-of-mind.

What will I need to do to have our sites migrated?

All we will need from your district is to update your DNS Settings that we will give you, and verify a certificate that we will have sent. If you use LDAP, that will need to be adjusted as well. However, don’t worry because we will send you emails that will give more specifics as we move through the process. The first step is simply replying to an email that will provide someone who has access to your DNS setup.

When will the migration happen?

We will be migrating all Schoolwires websites within the next several months. We will reach out to your district asking for a contact, and then we will share the exact date of migration with that person. Before the migration, there will be a few simple steps we ask you to take.

Will there be any impact on the current functions of the sites after the migration?

No, there will be no impact to the functionality of your sites after the migration. Your sites will benefit from being in a more secure and stable hosting environment.

Will there be any downtime for our site during the transition?

No. Your website will be live and all content will be visible during the migration to the new hosting environment. You will be notified of the date and time of the migration, which will occur during off-peak hours. **Please note that access to Site Manager will be disabled during the migration.**

Does your new hosting environments provide SSL Everywhere?

Yes, our new hosting environment provides SSL Everywhere data security.

What does “SSL Everywhere” mean, and why is it important?

SSL is encryption technology that adds increased security for computer data. Specifically, it provides a way of encoding data so that unauthorized viewers cannot intercept it in transit and view or alter it. Encryption technology is also used to secure data “at rest”, meaning that the disk drives that your data are stored on are encrypted. SSL Everywhere is often used to describe an environment in which all data transmissions through the internet are encrypted. This type of data protection is important because it keeps your data safe from unintended or unauthorized consumption. Though not currently required, it helps educators maintain FERPA standards. Additionally, some states now require that all Personally Identifiable Information (PII) is maintained in an environment that encrypts data end-to-end. In summary, data encryption is a good practice for data security, and is required by law in some environments.

Does this mean that my data hasn’t been secure up to this point?

Your website security has always been a priority to us, but as technology has changed, so have security requirements. While your current website hosting is secure, the new environment will allow us to provide you with the benefits of SSL Everywhere. This means that all data both at rest and in transmission will be encrypted. Your website traffic will all run under HTTPS protocol, making your site and data safer.

My state doesn’t have specific data security requirements, so can I ignore this for now?

No. We are migrating all Blackboard Web Community Manager sites to our new hosting environment to ensure that strict data security requirements are met for all customers. Not all states have strict data security requirements, but that doesn’t mean that data security isn’t important. Data encryption is a good idea, even if it’s not required. Also, the requirement for encrypted data housing and transmission is becoming increasingly common. It is likely that many states, if not all, will adopt similar requirements to those currently enacted in New York, Colorado, and other states.

What will I need to do to enable SSL Everywhere?

You will be contacted by a member of our team with the step-by-step instructions needed to move to the new hosting environment, which will enable SSL Everywhere on your sites.

Will it cost me anything to implement SSL Everywhere?

There is no cost to implement SSL Everywhere on your sites if you are a Blackboard Web Community Manager (formerly Schoolwires) customer with Blackboard hosted sites. The server certificates required for implementing SSL Everywhere can be acquired at no cost to your district.

I'm currently using Edline, SchoolWorld, SchoolCenter, or SchoolFusion. Will these products be moved to the new hosting environment?

We are unable to move these products into the new hosting environment, but this is a good opportunity to start discussions about moving to the Blackboard Web Community Manager (formerly Schoolwires), which will give you the benefits of the new hosting environment. Please review the video or request information on the page linked below, or feel free to contact the support team for your current product and they will be happy to have someone contact you to discuss details.

<http://offers.schoolwires.com/increase-engagement-Schoolwires>

If I am in a self-hosted implementation, can I implement SSL Everywhere?

SSL Everywhere is an option for both Blackboard Hosted and self-hosted clients. For self-hosted clients, there may be additional work and external costs required, but we are here to help. Our support team can help you start the process. Please contact us so we can schedule a call to discuss the work that you will need to do, and what changes we will need to make on our end, to facilitate this implementation.

Can we delay the migration of our sites?

At this time, we will not migrate your sites if you have not completed all of the required DNS and LDAP (if used) tasks. If you do not have all tasks completed by your scheduled migration date, we will reschedule your migration for a later date. There will be a future date where we will need to go ahead and migrate all sites, but that date has not been set yet and you will receive communication before that occurs.

Do I need to update my spam filter and SPF records?

Yes. You can update your spam filter and SPF records (if used). Mail server email sent from Web Community Manager will originate from our new servers: 52.206.191.224/27 (the /27 is the subnet mask).

Pre-Migration Questions

DNS

If I make DNS updates now, will my site break?

After updating the DNS records in your external DNS and internal DNS (if used), you will still be directed to your existing site on our current hosting environment. We have everything set up on our side to point your site to the new hosting environment on your migration date.

When making DNS updates, should I update existing A records and CNAME records, or should I delete the current records and create new records?

Although many DNS systems allow users to update records, you will need to delete the old record and recreate a new record. An A record and a CNAME record cannot coexist (for example, records for www). Before creating the CNAME record, the A record will need to be deleted.

After making the DNS updates, will my users be directed to a new site?

No, your users will still be directed to your existing site. Your existing site will be migrated to the new hosting environment.

Can I have multiple domains display for my district?

Our new hosting environment has many improvements, but it does not allow for more than one primary domain per district. The primary domain will display in the address bar of the browser and your secondary domain(s) will redirect to your primary domain. The only way to have multiple domains display in the address bar is to have separate sites that are not connected.

Will my incubation domain still work after site migration?

We will set up your old incubation domain as a redirect to your primary domain). The primary domain will appear in the address bar.

When I put 52.206.191.232 in a browser, it says "Site doesn't exist". Is this okay?

If you put the IP address (52.206.191.232) in a browser, you will not be directed to your Web Community Manager (Schoolwires) website. Only your actual domain name will bring up your site.

When I put my new incubation domain in a browser, it says "Unrecognized HostName". Is this okay?

Your incubation domain, which will be something like pa12345678.schoolwires.net, will not resolve to your website before the migration to our new hosting environment. After the migration, this domain will resolve to your site.

I didn't receive the email from Amazon Certificates.

The email from Amazon Certificates is sent to the following email addresses:

administrator@your_domain
hostmaster@your_domain
postmaster@your_domain
webmaster@your_domain
admin@your_domain

Email addresses provided in the WHOIS information for the registrant, administrative, and technical contacts for your domain.

If you have access to one or more of the email addresses listed above:

- Confirm that these addresses were created before the email was sent from Amazon Certificates.
- Check your spam filter.

If you currently do not have access to one of the email addresses listed:

- Create one of the email addresses or update the registrant, administrative, or technical contact email addresses with your domain provider.
- For security reasons, Blackboard is not able to specify or add additional email addresses to receive this email.

The email from Amazon Certificates will be resent each Tuesday until you validate your domain through the email.

Can I generate my own SSL certificate?

Adopting site-wide SSL is something that is going to be applied to the websites of all Blackboard Web Community Manager (Schoolwires) clients. Therefore, Blackboard is going to be responsible for managing thousands of SSL certificates. The most effective way for us to do this is through the AWS Certificate Manager. It assures that we have one single source for certificate generation and application, as well as a global management tool for certificate maintenance.

Further, once a domain is validated, there is potentially no further action to be taken for continued SSL coverage. As long as the DNS for the domain being covered by the certificate is pointing to a destination in Amazon Web Services, the certificate will be auto-renewed every 13 months. This is free to every WCM client.

I already have an SSL certificate for my domain. Can this be used?

No. Your current certificate will not be applied in the new AWS hosting environment.

LDAP

Do we have to set up secure LDAP for AWS?

If you decide to continue using LDAP authentication after the migration of your sites to our AWS hosting environment, then it must be set up as secure LDAP.

The other option is to adopt local authentication, instead of using LDAP. Upon first login in the new hosting environment, users can use the Forgot Password link that will send them an email prompting them to update their password.

Should the LDAP firewall updates be set for http or https?

Both.

Post-Migration Questions

My site was migrated to the new hosting environment, but we are experiencing issues.

If you experience any issues after your site migration has been completed, please send a new email to support@schoolwires.com or call the Blackboard Web Community Manager (Schoolwires) Support Team at 814-272-7300 with details. This will create a new case, which will expedite the resolution of any issues.