DATE: February 19, 2022
TO: Vice president of operations and Chief information Officer, Ken Ihrer
CC: IT project Manager, Marta Szkutnik
FROM: Bryan Ramos Student ID 24204200
SUBJECT: Cuny First and blackboard issues/ possible solutions

      My name is Bryan Ramos, and I'm a freshman at CCNY. I would like to discuss an issue that many students have been affected by, which is problems with CUNYFirst and blackboard. Cunyfirst is a platform used to do many things related to the cuny, like register and pay for classes, and transfer to different cuny institutions. Blackboard is a platform that is very important for both students and professors, as many announcements, class materials, and even exams are posted on it.

      I personally have experienced issues with these platforms, and I know of many other students who can say the same. From the first time I used these platforms, what stood out to me was the fact that the platform was laggy and at times slow, which is problematic because every student heavily relies on these platforms during their college experiences at a cuny school, which seems they should be reliable and efficient enough for to use. Sometimes the pages don't load correctly. Sometimes the website would show error messages and make students log in several times before allowing them to access it.

      When trying to access the website from mobile devices the issues are more prevalent, and at times it is simply unusable. This is especially an issue if you need to access the website quickly. For instance, when I took a covid test on campus, they required my cuny first student id. I attempted to access cuny first on my phone to see it. When I tried to log in, it continued to give me an error message. It took me around 15 minutes to successfully log in and see my id. As a result, the line was held up and it took me longer to take my covid test.

      Most CUNY students are on a busy schedule and it shouldn't take them that long to access cuny first, especially because a lot of important information can be found on the site. Blackboard has similar problems. It regularly goes through maintenance which at times can make it hard to access. This is a huge problem because a lot of the coursework and content are on the blackboard platform. Since the work on blackboard has deadlines, difficulty accessing Blackboard can cause students to miss them.

      Because of this, students' grades can be affected, which is a big problem. To fix these problems, I would suggest taking the time to completely revamp the platform. Some things that are overly complicated can be made more simple and easy for students to do, for example registering for classes, which is currently choppy at times. Since Blackboard isn't made by cuny, a fix for issues on there can be changing the platform to something that is more reliable and convenient.