



**Northeast Wisconsin Technical College**

Northeast Wisconsin Technical College (NWTC) is one of the 16 technical and community colleges in the Wisconsin Technical College System, supporting more than 41,500 students across multiple campuses and regional centers in the Green Bay, WI area. NWTC is an Achieving the Dream Leader College—a national designation awarded to community colleges that commit to improving student success and closing achievement gaps.

Like many community colleges, student persistence and completion are the cornerstones of Northeast Wisconsin Technical College (NWTC)'s mission. Faced with bold strategic student success goals, NWTC adopted Starfish® in 2013 to support changes to their advising model and build a culture of student success by using data to drive decision-making.

To be successful, the Starfish team knew that faculty buy-in was not "nice to have," it was essential. John Grant, Dean of Student Development, explained, "For us, the most crucial perspective is the faculty perspective. The classroom is where the students are, and that is where we measure their progress."

*"The most compelling data from our college is the acknowledgment by students that a notification through Starfish actually led to more motivation, a change in academic behaviors, and an increase in effort for students."*

- John Grant, Dean of Student Development

**51%**

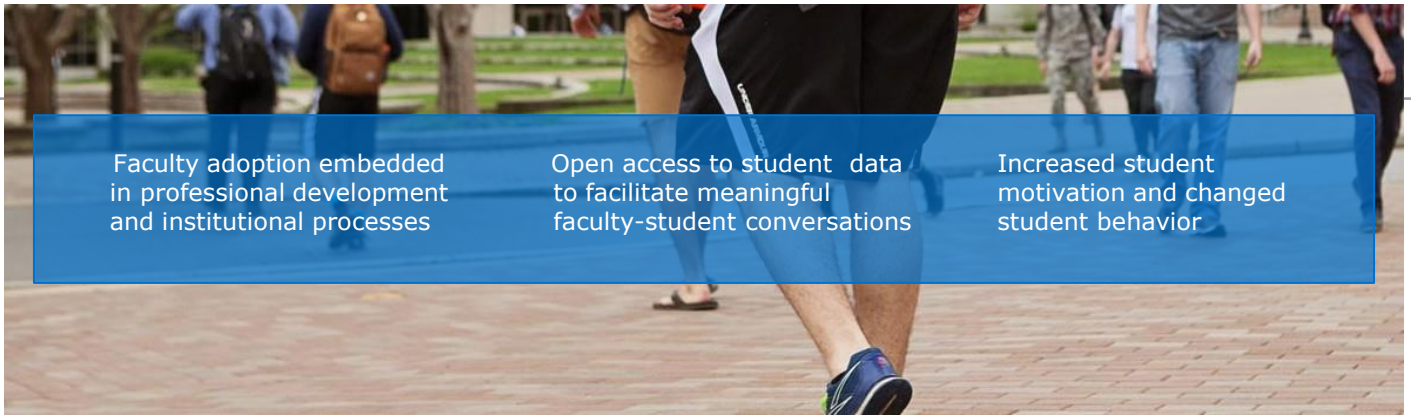
of faculty see students taking earlier action to improve since Starfish

**80%**

of students say Kudos helped motivate them

**82%**

of students who met with a faculty mentor enrolled in classes the following semester



Faculty adoption embedded in professional development and institutional processes

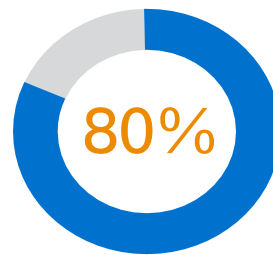
Open access to student data to facilitate meaningful faculty-student conversations

Increased student motivation and changed student behavior

### Involving Faculty from the Start

NWTC, by design, included faculty on the Starfish team and conducted rapid-fire training with all faculty at the start of implementation. Faculty members continue to sit on a steering committee that meets bi-weekly to discuss system changes, requests for updates and data analysis – providing great insight into how the system can be used.

NWTC also chose tools that are easy for faculty to integrate into their regular classroom management tasks. “Our old referral process was really manual,” explained Grant. “The progress surveys with Starfish helped faculty to give feedback about their students right away. Just with that, it became a lot easier to get faculty to participate.”



of students believe that receiving Kudos in Starfish increases their motivation to succeed

2x

NWTC faculty raise twice as many Kudos as flags.

### Commitment to Transparency

In order to really get faculty on board, the team at NWTC realized they needed to share information differently. Today, NWTC faculty have open access to data about all students, not just those in their course sections. The only exception is for counseling or disability services. As Grant explained, “We made the decision very intentionally, as a whole institution, about the way we were going to work and live every day - and that decision is that we support transparency across the institution. Sure, we had concerns, but quite honestly, we would rather commit to developing students from a larger perspective, with some exceptions to that, rather than build to the exceptions. We accept the responsibility that comes with that.”

“While it was a lift for faculty to not only raise but also close flags, we were able to get them on board because we could show them that the students wanted it that way,” said Grant.

And positive reinforcement is just as important as pointing out concerns. “Faculty have told us that students do better if they send a Kudo for overcoming a struggle, instead of a flag with a warning about a struggle. We believe in the power of positive reinforcement.”

### Respect Student Feedback

Like most institutions, NWTC launched their early alert workflows expecting a variety of student success teams to help catch and resolve faculty-raised flags. But after surveying students, they found that students want to work directly with the faculty member who raised the flag.

### Continued Refinement

While implementing a technology like Starfish, Grant acknowledged that it’s easy to be overwhelmed. “It’s a blessing and a curse that when you start digging in, you identify lots of ways to continue to use your data, to build out your services. You need to figure out what’s realistic and aligned with your goals for next twelve months,” said Grant. Instead, NWTC embraces continuous improvement over perfection and is constantly working to refine their processes.