Students don’t plan. Students don’t plan. Yes, there are some that come to our college yeah, I want to be a nurse or I want to be a civil engineer or technician, you know, I want to go out and work with computers, but they don’t plan. They don’t know how they’re going to get from where they are to where they think they want to go. Maybe they’ve read the catalog, maybe they’ve gone online, but what have they -- you know. So maybe they even know the academic progression, maybe they know the pathway, but they don’t know perhaps how they’re going to pay for it, how they’re going to take care of their kids while they’re in school, what are they going to do when they get anxious or get depressed about what’s going on in class. They don’t know how they’re going to handle those emergencies that come up that inevitably will come up.

And so what they do is they get started, right. I’m just going to get started. And they do that by engaging in a number of transactions, and that’s what we do as a college; we work with them one transaction after another. Think about it as a scattergram. All right. They only have a limited amount of time. I don’t know whether it’s three years or four years. You’ve only got so much energy, so many resources, but it’s a scattergram and they’re taking one transaction at a time. You look at their line, the dots are all over the place. We want them to soar higher in that period of time.

And so what we want to do is we want to minimize the standard deviation, don’t we? And we want to make sure that they’re moving all in an upward direction as far as they can during that time. That’s what we’ve done at Northeast Wisconsin Technical College. And frankly, it starts right at the point at which they’re thinking about making an application or perhaps even sooner. It starts with those dual-credit students that we have in the high school, those five thousand students. And we put in place career coaches. We embedded our personnel in the high schools to work with those students and not work with them just in terms of what they ought to do in their career, but how are you going to pay for it, what are your parents saying, do you have parents, are you homeless, how are you going to feed yourself. And we watch and we work with them all the way through the process with these career coaches. And since we put those in place, we’ve had a 15-point improvement in the numbers of students who make applications and actually make it to enrollment coming out of high school.

That’s allowed us and made us think about how can we change the adult experience. And so now every adult at the moment they first contact us gets an admission counselor assigned to them, and all that admission counselor does is work through putting those plans together with that individual one step at a time, and that’s improved our enrollment by four to six percentage points for those who participate.

We ask all of our students or prospective students to take an intake survey. And they tell us what are the things that they’re worried about. Of course the first one tends to be money, but after that, not surprisingly, they say you know what, I’ve only got so much time that I’ve allocated to study. I don’t know how I would study any more time than what I’ve allocated. This is before they even start classes. Or they’ll say -- 33 percent of them say I’ve got kids I’m taking care of. So right away before they even show up in the door of the class, we reach out and we begin to talk to them and put together their plans in terms of how they’re going to take care of their kids, how they’re going to pay for college, and where they can go to get help when they’re feeling anxious or depressed, or perhaps they have some other mental or situation going on with them. Perhaps they have domestic violence occurring, you know. Students are coming to us that are homeless or home insecure. They’re food insecure. And so we provide them the opportunities and where they can get those services met.

We also are using predictive analytics to be able to identify students early on, before they start, which ones may -- not necessarily will -- but may have more problems, be at greater risk, and for those we reach out and we pay special attention to.

One of the second things we’ve also done is integrated faculty advising. We have integrated the faculty advising with the academic advisor with the special accommodations advisor. And our goal, of course, is that they work together as a team using an early alert system, talking to those students and thinking about them in a holistic way, not just how you are doing academically and where you need to go, but how you’re going to get yourself there from where you are in your life right now. These are personalized plans, personalized goals for these individuals.

And you know what? We’ve done that work, we’ve worked with them, and they are soaring higher. Since we have started this in 2014, our completion rate has increased from 42 percent to 52 percent. We’re going to reach that 60 percent. Thank you.

**[END OF FILE]**