

# Lessons About Parent Engagement with Our Chatbot



## AFTER 15 MINUTES

of searching our school district website for first day of school information, a parent called the Worthington School District office. She wasn't angry, just frustrated. With our use of staggered start dates by grade level, this information is understandably confusing.

That call stuck with me, not because it was unusual, but because it wasn't. The information was on our website, but parents were struggling to find it. We had a communications accessibility problem that needed immediate attention.

To solve this, we implemented Finalsite's website chatbot, Ask AI (branded locally as "Ask Worthy"). We've learned four things from this experience.

### ► No. 1: Rethink your website as an experience, not a bulletin board.

Most school websites are designed to share information, not to engage visitors. Today's parents live in the age of ChatGPT. They expect to ask a question and get an answer instantly. A chatbot transforms your website from a static bulletin board into a 24/7 interactive tool that reduces frustration and makes families feel supported.

### ► No. 2: Use chatbot data to improve website content.

A good chatbot is more than a help desk. It's also an incredible source of data into what your community is looking for. Our team reviews the questions coming in and the answers being given regularly. When a response isn't helpful, we update the website content that feeds the bot's replies, continually improving the user's experience. This data monitors the pulse of what's important to our community.

### ► No. 3: Extend service hours without adding staff.

Homework and school-day prep happen long after our buildings are closed. When information isn't easy to find, parents and students turn to neighbors, group texts or Facebook in search of answers. Our chatbot changes that. It's always on, giving parents a reliable source of accurate information at any time of day.

### ► No. 4: Build trust by meeting families where they are.

Every website visit is an opportunity to build or lose trust. When parents get fast, accurate answers on a platform that's easy to use and in a language they understand, it sends a

powerful message: *You matter. We see you. We're here to help.* AI chatbots won't replace a great website or great customer service. They make both stronger and help build a deeper connection between home and school.

## Bottom Line

School communication can't be transactional. AI chatbots may be new in education (we started using ours in 2025), but when you use them strategically, those small, instant interactions start to stack up. With the right tools and the right partners, they turn into big trust wins.

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