

# SEO and AI

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ISACS Finalsite Fridays 2026



# The Second Check Wins



start with Search  
Engines

\*Google searches per U.S.  
user fell nearly 20%  
year-over-year

start with AI Tools

\*85% of SERPs now  
feature an AI Overview

start with Reviews

trust the first tool  
they use

\*Nearly 9 in 10  
double-check elsewhere.



# Before AI Overviews

# What Makes Content “Good” to EEAT?

## Experience

First-hand insights like teacher blogs, student reflections, real-life campus stories.

## Expertise

Knowledge from counselors, subject leaders, or veteran educators.

## Authoritativeness

Is your school cited or linked by respected sources?

## Trustworthiness

Clear, accurate, and honest information.



# How Google Uses E-E-A-T

## Core Updates & Algorithm Shifts

- Google gathers **content quality assessments** from search quality raters, as well as **user feedback, click patterns, AI testing, etc.**
- At least **quarterly**, it rolls out **Core Updates**: massive changes to how it ranks and evaluates content.
- These updates aim to better reflect **human intent** behind searches, not just exact keywords.
- The goal is to reflect the “**Jobs To Be Done**” framework. Consider this scenario:
  - Searchers are trying to solve a problem or make progress (not just search randomly)
  - Example: searching for “Best boarding school” may really mean: “Help me find a safe, transformative place for my child to learn and grow.”
- Google is increasingly using **Small Language Models (SLMs)** for specific ranking tasks because they are faster and more efficient than **Large Language Models (LLMs)**. This explains why “**Experience**” and “**Trustworthiness**” are becoming easier for Google to verify at scale.



# Before AI, Evergreen was Already Queen

Evergreen content  
already appeared in:

- Featured snippets
- “People Also Ask” boxes
- Knowledge panels

## Seven Benefits of Boarding School

By Darryl Gangloff

Boarding school offers students an experience unlike any other: to immerse themselves in their education, grow within a supportive and diverse community, and position themselves for success after school. Statistics show that boarding school students feel more prepared for life after graduation, are more likely to earn advanced degrees, and rate their school experience as very satisfactory.

LET'S EXPLORE SEVEN OF THE TOP ADVANTAGES OF A BOARDING SCHOOL EDUCATION.

### 1. Challenging Academics

A boarding school education is known for being more challenging than a private day school or public school. For example, at our Connecticut private boarding school, our college preparatory curriculum uniquely emphasizes [rigorous academics](#) and experience-based learning. An experience-centered environment helps students grow in self-discipline and develop a strong work ethic that will prepare them for higher education. In fact, 78% of boarding school students [reported feeling prepared for college](#) versus 36% of private day students and 23% of public students.

### 2. Peer Learning

In a [boarding school setting](#), you live, play, study, and socialize among your peers. A diverse boarding school setting with students from different backgrounds offers a special opportunity for growth and learning. Students can expand their perspectives and horizons as they learn together both in and out of the classroom.

According to a study conducted by The Association of Boarding Schools (TABS), 78% of boarding students reported being motivated by their peers, a number significantly higher than the 49% of public school students. When you live and learn together in a community, you motivate and grow together, too.

### 3. Smaller Class Sizes

Small class sizes can make all the difference in a student's success. When students have the chance to interact with their peers and teachers, they engage



# After AI Overviews

# Now, Evergreen Content Powers AI Overviews

\*But It Has to Be  
Chunked Right

- AI Overviews pull pieces of content, not whole articles.
- Each paragraph, sentence, or section is judged on its own:  
Can this snippet help answer the question?
- To be used by AI, your content must:
  - Have clear sections with subheadings.
  - Use direct, factual phrasing—no fluff or salesy copy.
  - Include specific examples, names, stats, or actions that AI can cite.
  - Answer one question at a time per paragraph.
- This is called “chunking” your content and it increases your chance of being included in the AI summary.



class size is just 12 students. This gives everyone an opportunity to have their voice heard and learn from the perspectives of fellow students.

## 4. Personal Growth

Living away from home and [residing on campus](#) in a dorm setting provides invaluable opportunities for personal growth. Boarding school students tend to develop life skills such as time management, work ethic, and independence in an accelerated manner than a public school student.

While they receive ample care and guidance from [teachers](#), administrators, and dorm parents, as well as their families, boarding students must take an added level of responsibility for their education. This growth is part of what helps many boarders feel adequately prepared to step into [college](#), where these skills are necessary to succeed.

The accessibility of extracurricular activities and clubs means that students must make key time management decisions to prioritize their commitments and create a balanced schedule.

## 5. A Learning-Conducive Atmosphere

### AI Overview

Boarding schools offer a unique educational experience focused on personal growth, academic excellence, and community development, often providing a structured environment that fosters independence and prepares students for future success. They provide smaller class sizes, diverse cultural experiences, and opportunities for extracurricular activities, all within a supportive and often residential setting.

Key benefits of boarding school include:

#### Enhanced Personal Growth:

Boarding schools encourage independence and responsibility, helping students develop essential life skills like time management, self-reliance, and problem-solving.

#### Academic Excellence:

### Seven Benefits of Boarding School

Boarding school offers students an experience unlike any other: to immerse themselves in th...

The Hotchkiss School

### 20 Reasons Why Boarding School Is Better Than Day School

Mar 14, 2025 — Boarding schools can extend learning beyond traditional class hours with...

Darrow School

Why Boarding School? The Top 5

So, this “chunk,”

shows up like this



# So, How Do AI Overviews Work?



# One Question → Many Answers (In Very Simple Terms)



## 1. Searchers type a question

Google pulls answers from lots of places.

## 2. Google “fans out” and looks for:

- Direct matches
- Related questions
- Recent searches
- *What the person probably meant or might ask next*

## 3. AI writes a summary, checking if your content can back up what it said.

If it finds your content helpful, it links to it right in the answer.

\*Google is still trying to calibrate what makes the best sources, but we’re still seeing 86% of generative results come from sources you already control (your website, directories, etc.).



The fan-out technique means that being present in  
*multiple forms, across platforms and topics,*  
is your best shot at being found.



**So what does this  
look like for you?**

# Fan-Out Content Line Map

<b>Content Type</b>	<b>Best schools for creative arts</b>			
<b>Evergreen Blog Content</b>	“Top 5 Reasons to Prioritize the Arts in Education”			
<b>Community Voices/Stories</b>	“How Sarah Found Her Voice in Our Music Program”			
<b>Magazine Article</b>				
<b>Downloadable</b>	“Guide to Choosing a School for Creative Learners”			
<b>Social Media Post</b>				
<b>Google Business Panel Post</b>				
<b>YouTube Video</b>				

# The Winning Formula is Already in Place

- The rise of AI isn't an "emergency fire," it's an evolution
- Take the great work you're already doing to succeed in the new era
  - Be credible (EEAT)
  - Be present "everywhere" (Fan-Out)
  - Build trust (be a "Known Entity")
- You are simply maximizing the return on the content you already have.



# Connect with Cristina!

About Analytics, SEO, Google, or Ads

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