

Loomis Chaffee

January 20, 2022

Dear Members of the Loomis Chaffee Community,

As you now know from her January 20, 2022, letter, Sheila has decided to retire as Loomis Chaffee's head of school at the end of the 2022–23 academic year. When she shared her decision with the board, the Trustees had mixed emotions. Since we enjoy working with her so much, we had hoped that she might stay longer, but after 15 years at Loomis Chaffee and a professional life dedicated to education, we know that she deserves a fulfilling retirement and are excited for her as she prepares to pursue new passions and enjoy more time with Richard and Matthew.

Sheila's tenure as Loomis Chaffee's seventh head of school and first woman in that role began with the 2008 global financial crisis and will end with a hoped-for dissipation of the coronavirus pandemic. Between these challenges, both of which she has handled with a strong work ethic, clear insight, and sound judgement, her achievements have been many, and her commitment to the health, welfare, and success of our students, faculty, staff, and alumni steadfast. We have been fortunate to have her confident, skilled, and decisive leadership usher our school into its second century.

Reflecting on the past decade and a half, the accomplishment that has altered the school's trajectory most significantly is the transformation of the boarding/day ratio. Sheila's predecessors, John Ratté and Russ Weigel, began that shift, but with the construction of Richmond and Cutler halls and the ongoing renovations to and expansions of the Grubbs Quadrangle dormitories, Loomis Chaffee's student body is now 70 percent residential. Sheila was able to facilitate that change while reinforcing our strong commitment to students from our local communities and keeping the school accessible for families from all socioeconomic backgrounds. That success has led to yearly record-setting applications for admission and to the increased diversity — by so many measures — of our student body.

In her pursuit of excellence in all that Loomis Chaffee offers, Sheila has partnered with highly qualified and talented administrators, faculty, staff, and Trustees. A leader by example, Sheila always gives her best and inspires those around her to do the same. As a result, the school and its reputation are stronger than they have ever been. Sheila's particular focus on raising salaries, offering better benefits, strengthening the human resources program, and improving and expanding housing have helped attract and retain superb classroom teachers who are and always have been the heart and soul of Loomis Chaffee.

As the school's most important ambassador, Sheila has traveled across the United States and around the world to share the story of Loomis Chaffee and to cultivate special relationships with alumni, parents, and friends. Those excursions have also brought substantial fundraising success to the school. During her tenure, the Annual Fund has more than doubled; total voluntary support

has averaged \$12.6 million per year; *Our Time Is Now: The Centennial Campaign for Loomis Chaffee* raised \$131 million, surpassing its \$100 million goal; the school has benefitted from six of its best 10 fundraising years; and the endowment has reached \$261 million, an historic high.

Sheila has embraced and engaged fully in all aspects of the head of school role from student and faculty recruitment to alumni and parent relations; from fiscal management to fundraising; from curriculum review and enhancement to program development in student life, athletics, and the arts; from diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives to strategic planning; and much more. Her unwavering dedication to inspire in our students a commitment to the best self and the common good is evident in all she does, but maybe nowhere more so than in the creation during her tenure of the Norton Family Center for the Common Good, the Henry R. Kravis '63 Center for Excellence in Teaching, the Alvord Center for Global & Environmental Studies, the Pearse Hub for Innovation, and the Center for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, all of which distinguish the school from our peers.

As we embark on a search for Sheila's successor — a process that will involve the whole community and about which I will write to you soon after our winter board meeting — I am reminded that the Founders entrusted their dream, their vision of a school with a time-honored mission, to Loomis Chaffee's future heads of school and generation after generation of students, alumni, parents, faculty, staff, and Trustees. It is a dream Sheila has stewarded well, and I look forward to her continued leadership in the coming 18 months. Thank you again, Sheila, for your dedication and for helping to strengthen Loomis Chaffee's position as one of the best independent secondary schools in this nation and the world.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Duncan MacLean". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "M".

Duncan A.L. MacLean '90
Chair, Board of Trustees