



Search for the Head of School

**The Loomis Chaffee School
Windsor, Connecticut**



Loomis Chaffee's "Island" campus with the Connecticut River and Hartford in the background.

THE SEARCH

The [Loomis Chaffee School](#) seeks a visionary, global thought leader and strategist with a proven skill for managing organizational complexity and encouraging innovation to serve as the eighth head of school. Championing the school's mission to advance the development of students in mind, body, and spirit through rigorous academic programs, an inclusive community, and an emphasis on engaged citizenship, the next head of school will prioritize building on Loomis Chaffee's many strengths to ensure that the school continues to offer students an excellent education and inspire in them a commitment to the best self and the common good for generations to come.

From its founding in 1874 and opening in 1914, Loomis Chaffee has evinced a powerful commitment to access and inclusion and to serving the common good, two pillars that remain core to the school's identity — and that have deepened in important ways — over a century later. While these bedrock principles continue to serve as institutional anchors, the school has never rested on its laurels; its evolution and, in particular, its recent trajectory have been impressive. Over the last 15 years, Loomis Chaffee has strategically expanded its population of boarding students (today it's 70 percent boarding, 30 percent day), prioritized the recruitment of a more racially, ethnically, and geographically diverse student body and faculty, expanded and updated the physical plant, and elevated the profile of the school among its peers. The campus, lovingly referred to as "the Island," is a joyful place. Academics, athletics, the arts, and, most importantly, the students are thriving. It is an exciting moment to welcome a new head and for the right new head to apply the school's timeless founding mission for today's students, ensuring Loomis Chaffee maintains its relevance in an ever-changing, more interconnected world.

Indeed, the next head of school will have the opportunity to lead an already distinctive educational community to its next level of excellence. In collaboration with the school's administrative team, faculty, staff, students, and Trustees, the head will develop and implement Loomis Chaffee's next strategic plan. Strengthening ties across campus (for students and adults alike) and deepening the collective sense of community togetherness and student well-being will be core to this work, as will ensuring a continued spirit of innovation and sustainability.

The head must effectively manage the long-term strategic view and the daily rhythms and challenges of a bustling and diverse school community, spanning 300 acres and serving approximately 735 students. At the same time, the head must uphold and celebrate the many individual human connections that keep the school humming along. This calls for a leader with intellectual gravitas, sophisticated interpersonal and organizational skills, and a genuine love for the magic of boarding school life. Experience partnering with a Board of Trustees, with the development and support of high-performing administrators, faculty, and staff, and with raising funds for key institutional priorities will also be important.

The Loomis Chaffee School has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in the recruitment of its next head of school. Please direct all inquiries, nominations, and applications to the search firm, as indicated at the end of this document.

For more information about Loomis Chaffee, including its founding, history of leadership, curricular and co-curricular offerings, faculty, and campus please see the appendix at the end of this document.

LOOMIS CHAFFEE'S NEXT HEAD OF SCHOOL

The next head of school will report to the [26-person Board of Trustees](#) and lead a [strong administrative team](#).

To best serve Loomis Chaffee, the next head must be prepared to address the following opportunities and challenges:

Continue to foster a culture that values community and the dignity of all

Loomis Chaffee prides itself on the distinctive nature of its community. That community is the result of a caring, respectful, inclusive, and kind culture that values and celebrates individuality in equal measure

with engaged citizenship and a commitment to the common good. These core values form the foundation of the Loomis Chaffee experience. The incoming head must embrace and reinforce this culture, building relationships with faculty and staff based on trust and transparency through thoughtful decision-making, clear communication, and inclusive processes, and should strive to bolster dialogue, collaboration, and innovation in pursuit of the best educational and residential experiences for students, faculty, and staff. Loomis Chaffee students are deeply and thoughtfully engaged in the school community, and it is essential that the next head continues to value their perspectives and to actively seek their thoughts and ideas about the school. In this work, it will also be important to bring the wider school community of students, parents, faculty, staff, and alumni together in celebratory and fun ways. The successful leader will balance visibility and accessibility — genuinely knowing and caring about every member of the community — with a strong and decisive executive presence in service of the school.

Strengthen the school's evolving identity and guide the school into its next chapter, including the development of a new strategic plan

The Loomis Chaffee community is deeply attuned to the history, character, and culture of the Island, along with its founding principles and mission. For many, the years spent at Loomis Chaffee are a profoundly formative experience; that passion is palpable when speaking with alumni. The school, of course, has also undergone remarkable change. Over the past fifteen years, the student community has shifted from a 54 percent boarding, 46 percent day school to a school that is today 70 percent boarding, 30 percent day. That shift was made while reinforcing the school's strong commitment to serving students from local communities and to ensuring that a Loomis Chaffee education remains accessible for families from all socioeconomic backgrounds. Loomis Chaffee now holds its place among the most selective boarding schools in the country, in terms of overlapping admissions, while still retaining an identity that is quintessentially "Loomis Chaffee." While this transition has been powerful and healthy, it has also introduced new and continuing challenges: meeting the needs of a more residential student community while safeguarding a sense of belonging for day students, balancing increasing demands placed on residential faculty while ensuring that non-residential faculty feel integrated into the Island, and finding ways to be proudly elite but not elitist while cementing a place in national conversations.

With this context as background, and in close collaboration with the Board and the entire Loomis Chaffee community, the next head of school will articulate an ambitious and compelling vision for the school's next chapter and develop and implement a corresponding strategic plan. The plan should outline strategies to enhance programs, practices, and resources to best equip students with the skills needed to contribute to a changing world — and faculty and staff with the resources essential to supporting them — without sacrificing the essence that is Loomis Chaffee or the school's commitment to the best self and the common good.

Recruit, retain, and support excellent faculty, staff, and administrators, and continue to prioritize the school's commitment to academic excellence

The head will build on the school's longstanding legacy of academic excellence, encouraging innovation among faculty and celebrating the intellectual life of the school. The caliber of the academic program at Loomis Chaffee is exceptionally strong, and the next head must continue to nurture the intellectual ambition and pedagogical sophistication for which the school is known.

In addition, the head of school will be an advocate for the adult community, continuing to prioritize the recruitment and retention of high-quality faculty, staff, and administrators. Adults at the school are asked to wear many hats, particularly in a residential environment. The new head will continue to bring thoughtful leadership to balancing these roles and responsibilities, while also creating opportunities for professional development. The head will simultaneously attend to the internal culture, inviting many voices to the table and encouraging and modeling active listening and collaboration. Alongside this, the head will support and empower a strong administrative team to efficiently manage the school's operations and will model distributed leadership. The head will ensure that each administrator's responsibilities effectively leverage their talents and capacities, prioritizing efficiency, cohesion, and clarity of roles and responsibilities to meet individual management needs and styles.

Emphasize wellness, balance, and belonging in a world of increasing pressures and demands

The head of school must be a fierce advocate and ally in support of wellness and balance for all students, faculty, and staff. At Loomis Chaffee, no single "type" of student is more valuable than any other, and the school equally celebrates student achievements in academics, athletics, the arts, and other co-curricular pursuits. This egalitarian ethos is clearly evident on campus, and Loomis Chaffee must remain a welcoming and supportive place for all students. The head, in partnership with administrative leadership and the school more broadly, must continually assess the need for revised policies and support structures to support the safety, mental health, and wellbeing of all of its community members.

Continue to advance access, inclusion, and belonging

Since its opening in 1914, Loomis Chaffee has championed the egalitarian notion that neither religion, nor sex, nor geographical origin, nor financial standing will preclude a student from enrolling in the school. This historic commitment has been unwavering and remains so to this day. The values of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging at the school are deeply rooted and, now more than ever, are critical for its students to thrive in the world beyond its walls. The head will ensure that the voices of all students, faculty, and staff are heard and will continually examine and redesign policies, procedures, and services to ensure equity. The head must likewise demonstrate a commitment to an inclusive community across race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, political beliefs, and ability, and promote principles of empathy and open dialogue. They must be dedicated to diversifying faculty and staff and supporting their professional growth. The head must also demonstrate the capacity and humility necessary to engage in evolving conversations and support the Loomis Chaffee community in continuing to adopt meaningful change.

Capably manage and grow the financial foundation of the school

While Loomis Chaffee has enjoyed a stable financial foundation over many years, the school's ambitious goals and long-term sustainability necessitate a consistent focus on resources. The head will continue to elevate the school's fundraising profile and successes and will collaborate with the Board to ensure the school's fiscal strength well into the future. The generosity of current Loomis Chaffee parents, families, alumni, and parents of alumni plays a significant role in allowing the school to recruit and retain excellent faculty, sustain the socioeconomic diversity of the student body through financial aid, and plan for future improvements to the school's facilities and programs. All of these initiatives must be sustained and enhanced through continued fundraising efforts, with the head as the school's lead ambassador in this important work.

Continue the school's tradition of intellectual leadership, excellence, and innovation

From its founding mission through the current day, Loomis Chaffee has not been afraid to be different, to be a thought leader, and to infuse in its students and broader community a true sense of empathy, kindness, and compassion for others. All of these qualities can be felt on campus and in each interaction with community members.

Over the last 15 years, the school has opened the Norton Family Center for the Common Good, the Alvord Center for Global & Environmental Studies, the Pearse Hub for Innovation, the Center for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, and the Kravis Center for Excellence in Teaching. Each of these centers, drawn from the richness of the school's founding mission, was innovative in its formation and has served to set the school apart, augmenting its deep-rooted commitment to excellence. Loomis Chaffee holds conferences with other schools to help nurture and lead discussions about academics, pedagogy, technology, and wellness and is a true thought leader amongst its peer schools in many of these areas. The next head of school must exhibit a desire to innovate in education and campus life, be comfortable nurturing and leading discussions in the broader educational community, and be ambitious in continuing the school's tradition of leadership, excellence, and innovation.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

While no one candidate will embody every quality, the successful candidate will bring many of the following qualifications and attributes:

Professional Experience

- A deep appreciation for the history of the school, and the ability to effectively and eloquently articulate its mission and the importance of a Loomis Chaffee education.
- Experience developing and sustaining a culture of innovation in a school or other organization; an appetite for engaging with academic leaders and faculty on critical discussions of educational policy, pedagogy, curriculum, and interdisciplinary and global education.
- Excellence in communication, with the ability to energize and inspire faculty, students, staff, parents, alumni, Trustees, and a range of external stakeholders.
- An institution builder with a record of successful administrative leadership; the ability to build and manage high-performing teams, and to be both collaborative and decisive.
- Strong business acumen and a record of executing large, ambitious, and fiscally responsible plans.
- Enthusiasm for fundraising; a willingness to be actively involved in advancement strategy and implementation, and the aptitude for building strong personal connections on behalf of the school.
- An advanced degree is preferred.

Personal Qualities

- An academic at heart; a lifelong learner and innovator, possessing an entrepreneurial spirit and growth mindset.
- A dynamic intellect; a curious, courageous leader with sound judgement and a strong internal compass.

- A community builder with a knack for forging meaningful connections with students and adults alike.
- Exceptional verbal and written communication skills; thoughtful, inspiring, and authentic, possessing the ability to craft tailored messages for a range of audiences or constituency groups.
- Patience and the ability to make sound decisions in the face of imperfect information.
- A joyful person who exudes warmth and fun, has a good sense of humor, listens well, and is genuinely curious about and interested in people.

TO APPLY

The Loomis Chaffee School has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in this recruitment. All inquiries, nominations, referrals, and applications (resumes and letters of interest) should be sent electronically and in confidence to:

Katie Rockman, Partner
Sheryl Ash, Partner
Berkley Burke, Managing Associate
Miguel Santiago Senior Associate
Isaacson, Miller

<https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/loomis-chaffee-school/head-school>

An equal opportunity employer, the Loomis Chaffee School is fully committed to attracting, retaining, and developing the most qualified employees without regard to their race, gender, color, age, nation of origin, sexual orientation, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.

APPENDIX: ABOUT THE LOOMIS CHAFFEE SCHOOL

Mission

The mission of The Loomis Chaffee School is to advance the development of students in mind, body, and spirit through rigorous academic programs, an inclusive community, and an emphasis on engaged citizenship. The school, as its Founders intended, seeks to inspire in its students a commitment to the best self and the common good.

Founding and Early History

Located in Windsor, Connecticut, the Loomis Institute was chartered in 1874 by five siblings who had lost all their children and selflessly determined to establish a school as a gift to the children of others. Since its opening in 1914, the school has offered educational opportunities for students regardless of religious or political beliefs, national origin, or financial resources. Today's school embraces diversity in all its forms and attracts students from around the world, all of whom possess their own unique interests, talents, experiences, and backgrounds, and are eager to pursue excellence inside and outside of the classroom within a supportive and welcoming community.

Loomis Chaffee Today

Loomis Chaffee has enjoyed strong and stable leadership in recent history, with just three long-serving and outstanding heads of school over the last 50 years. This consistency at the helm has allowed the school to pursue long-term, ambitious aims that have built on Loomis Chaffee's founding mission and purpose while innovating for the current moment.

Since 2008, the strategic shift to a 70 percent residential community has resulted in noteworthy advances in admissions: in the past six years, applications to Loomis Chaffee have increased by a third, the acceptance rate changed from 28 to 17 percent, and yield improved from 45 percent to 53 percent. Also, in the past 15 years, the school has raised more than \$177 million, including \$131 million for *Our Time Is Now: The Centennial Campaign for Loomis Chaffee*, surpassing the campaign's \$100 million goal. During this same time period, the school constructed the Scanlan Campus Center, two new residence halls (with a third scheduled for construction in 2023–24), and the John D. and Alexandra C. Nichols Center for Theater and Dance; renovated several campus buildings, including three dormitories (with a fourth scheduled for 2023–24); and completed a campus master plan, a curriculum review, and reaccreditation in 2011 and 2021 by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC).

With excitement and a strong sense of purpose, the Loomis Chaffee community looks ahead to its continued journey through its second century, providing students with an extraordinary and transformative education in an intimate setting and inspiring in them a sense of responsibility for their community and the wider world.

Leadership

In December 2007, the Loomis Chaffee Trustees appointed Sheila Culbert as the seventh head of school and president of The Loomis Institute; she began her tenure in these roles in July 2008. Having grown up in a family of nine and having attended boarding school in Belgium, Sheila has always loved the hustle and

bustle of communal living and learning. A civil war historian, an ardent gardener and birder, and an avid reader, Sheila is passionate about education and the importance of developing in students a love of learning and an acceptance of the responsibilities that come with privilege. She loves teaching and being with young people.

Sheila received her undergraduate degree from the University of Nottingham in the United Kingdom and came to the United States, with her husband, Richard Wright, for graduate work at Indiana University. With doctorates in hand, Sheila and Richard moved to the Northeast — Sheila to teach at Phillips Exeter Academy and Richard to assume a faculty position in the Geography Department at Dartmouth College. After six years at Exeter, where she taught, lived in a dormitory, and coached sports, Sheila moved to Dartmouth where she taught history and worked in the administration. Prior to coming to Loomis Chaffee, she served as the chief of staff to the president of Dartmouth College and as the interim vice president for communications. Throughout her time at Dartmouth, Sheila taught in the History Department where she developed the course on the American Civil War. After 16 years of service to Loomis Chaffee, Sheila will retire at the end of the 2023–24 school year.

Academics

A Loomis Chaffee education is built on the pillars of excellence and opportunity. The school's rigorous academic environment and co-curricular programming nurture students' intellectual curiosity in myriad ways. The broad and deep liberal arts curriculum is comprised of approximately 250 courses, including almost 70 courses at the college or advanced level, and prepares students for success in college and beyond, while allowing them to pursue academic areas of interest and passion projects in more depth.

What helps make the educational experience at Loomis Chaffee truly distinctive are the abundant opportunities for students to take what they learn in the classroom and apply their knowledge and skills in the real world to make a positive impact in the lives of others in communities near and far. Many of these opportunities are developed in and promoted by the school's centers and in programming that bring faculty and students together from across campus to identify and address issues of common interest.

The [Norton Family Center for the Common Good](#) encourages an expanded understanding of students' roles as citizens and leaders in a diverse democracy and fosters an active, engaged approach to citizenship. All ninth-grade students participate in the center's Seminar in the Best Self, and all tenth-grade students participate in the Seminar in the Common Good. The Norton Fellows program provides selected students with funding for summer projects that they design and implement in their home communities.

The [Alvord Center for Global & Environmental Studies](#) asks students, "What will you do with what you know?" The center's Global & Environmental Studies Certificate program, Gilchrist Environmental Fellowships, and International Education Programs provide students with many different ways to play an active role in an interconnected world.

The [Pearse Hub for Innovation](#) (the PHI) and its capstone Innovation Trimester (I-Tri) encourage students to "make things and make a difference." Much more than a maker's space, the PHI has its own interdisciplinary curriculum with a focus on problem solving, design thinking, and entrepreneurship. Students in PHI courses identify and design solutions for problems/challenges on campus and within the local community, regularly partnering with local businesses and non-profits.

The [Writing Initiatives Program](#) continues the long tradition of a focus on writing at Loomis Chaffee and the development of essential writing competencies across the curriculum. Working with faculty in all departments, the program supports the Writing Studio, the year-long sophomore Writing Workshop, the annual Emerging Writers exhibition, and several writing competitions.

Faculty

One of the most important factors in students' success at Loomis Chaffee is the faculty. The school's teachers, coaches, advisors, and mentors model a passion for life-long learning, the power of collaboration, and active engagement with the world, and the school prioritizes their continued professional development. The [Henry R. Kravis '63 Center for Excellence in Teaching](#), established in 2010, is an invaluable resource for faculty in these endeavors, offering myriad professional development opportunities, new faculty training, and consultations with departments and individual teachers on areas of interest and/or concern. The center also facilitates faculty-wide conversations and work on issues of pedagogy, including grading, curriculum assessment and DEI audit, academic technology, and the science of learning. Loomis Chaffee is also a member of a consortium of boarding schools that partner with the University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Education in the latter's Boarding School Teaching Residency program.

Athletics, Arts, and Student Life

Beyond the academic program, Loomis Chaffee students benefit from a long tradition of championship-level athletics. Since 2012, the school's interscholastic teams have won 87 Founders League championships and 20 New England/Western New England championships. Loomis Chaffee also possesses a rich history of extensive programs in the performing and visual arts. These programs welcome all students — from those with years of experience to those interested in trying something new — and are structured to allow them to grow as artists, creators, and performers while also pursuing other interests, including athletics and community service. Both the athletics and the arts programs at Loomis Chaffee regularly leverage the cultural power they hold at the school to make a positive difference in daily life on the Island. The school also supports more than 75 student clubs and organizations, including a student newspaper, literary journal, multicultural and affinity groups, student council, debate society, robotics, and service organizations.

A rich residential life rounds out the Loomis Chaffee experience. Boarding students live in 13 dormitories, which range in size from 10 to 50 students. More than 40 faculty and their families live in the dormitories and, together with faculty affiliates, student prefects, and resident assistants, create a vibrant, welcoming, and safe home away from home for more than 500 residential students. A new honorary resident program helps connect day students to the dormitory communities.

Access and Inclusion

Since its opening in 1914, Loomis Chaffee has offered educational opportunities for students regardless of gender, religious or political beliefs, national origin, or financial resources. The school is committed to enrolling the most outstanding applicants and creating the best possible educational opportunities for them, regardless of their ability to pay. Operating as a tuition-free school until the 1960s, Loomis Chaffee has remained accessible for students from a wide range of socioeconomic backgrounds due to its unwavering commitment to financial aid.

The [Loomis Chaffee Center for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion](#) promotes and fosters an inclusive school community through the celebration of the diversity of its members; a sustained examination of privilege and biases; and the evolution of institutional policies, structures, and practices. The center works with students, faculty, staff, and the administration; provides on-going training on DEI issues; helps to support underrepresented students in their transitions to Loomis Chaffee; advises student-run organizations and affinity and ally groups; and sponsors campus-wide social, cultural, and educational events.

Finance and Governance

Loomis Chaffee has a \$66.5 million annual operating budget and a \$230 million endowment. Tuition income covers 73 percent of the annual budget, with the remainder coming from annual fund giving (9 percent), earned revenue (2 percent) and endowment (16 percent). Approximately 33 percent of students receive financial assistance, and financial aid totals \$12 million annually.

The school is governed by a 26-member Board of Trustees, most of whom serve up to three consecutive four-year terms. Trustees usually meet four times per year as a full board, while Board committees meet regularly and additionally on an as-needed basis.

Board committees include Admission, Financial Aid, and College Guidance; Audit; Building and Grounds; the Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; the Committee on Mission and Program; the Committee on Trustees; Development; Finance; Investment; and Salaries and Benefits.

Campus and Location

Loomis Chaffee's beautiful 300-acre, suburban campus is located in Windsor, Connecticut, just north of the state's capital, Hartford, at the confluence of the Farmington and Connecticut rivers. To the east, the campus is surrounded by an expanse of meadows that is home to many of the school's playing fields, while additional athletics fields and facilities border the west side of campus. Most of the school's academic and residential buildings are centrally located and organized around the Grubbs, Rockefeller, and Ratté quadrangles; the latter quad is also home to the visual and performing arts facilities. The Way provides a scenic north/south pedestrian walkway through campus, while the almost one-mile Loop roadway circles the main campus.

Loomis Chaffee is uniquely situated with a quintessential, bucolic campus and yet only 15 minutes from cultural events in Hartford. The school is easily accessible by car, train, and air, and is approximately 2.5 hours from New York City and 1.75 hours from Boston. The Amtrak station is an easy walk from campus, and Bradley International Airport is just a 15-minute car ride away. Windsor, Connecticut, is home to an active and engaged citizenry of approximately 30,000 people, and Loomis Chaffee is proud to be part of this wonderful community. The school is within walking distance of the town center and its restaurants, banks, supermarket, pharmacy, public library, and other areas of interest. Additionally, there are a wide variety of dining, shopping, and cultural and entertainment options in the Greater Hartford region, including the Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts, The Hartford Stage, the Hartford Symphony Orchestra, Trinity College, the Hartford Yard Goats minor league baseball team, and much more.