

# Loomis Chaffee

Social media has changed the way we communicate — both as an institution and as individuals. Social media allows the Loomis Chaffee School to engage in ongoing, digital conversations with our constituents — students, faculty, staff, parents, alumni, colleagues, community leaders, fans, and friends — about what is most important to them in the space where they are at. Such conversations must be responsible, thoughtful, respectful, and uphold the standards and values of the Loomis Chaffee School.

## ACCOUNT CREATION AND OWNERSHIP

Departments, dorms, programs, and organizations are encouraged to use social media to communicate with their audiences. The Office of Strategic Communications and Marketing and a dean, director, or supervisor of your unit must grant permission to start an account. It is the responsibility of the unit supervisor and the account administrator to actively monitor the account and keep content current and accurate. The unit supervisor has the right to grant or revoke administrative privileges. The unit remains the owner of the account. The Office of Strategic Communications and Marketing has the right to step in as administrator should the content veer from what is responsible, thoughtful, and respectful (see below).

When naming your account, use “Loomis Chaffee” in the title or in the description to help with search engine optimization. Avoid the use of acronyms that would limit the search ability of your channel.

Create a continuity plan, always having an administrator, adviser, or successor as part of your authorized users. Protect all passwords. The account administrator will need to share the account username, password, and the names and Loomis Chaffee email addresses of all authorized users of the account with the Office of Strategic Communications and Marketing. Account recovery emails should be a faculty or staff member’s Loomis Chaffee email address.

## BE RESPONSIVE AND RESPONSIBLE

The best social media is communication that is timely and responsive. Be aware of the needs of your audience to provide the most useful information and to grow the engagement for your audience.

**Account administrator responsibilities:** Account administrators who post to social media as part of their job responsibilities or as designated volunteers of the unit are subject to the conditions set out in the Student Handbook and Employee Handbook. When posting on behalf of the unit, you are not permitted to use profanity or derogatory language; to use sexually explicit language or material; to post copyrighted material unless granted permission; to make libelous statements; or to attack an individual or group. Those who do so risk disciplinary action or termination. Do not post confidential and proprietary information about the Loomis Chaffee, including information about students, alumni, or employees. Remember that most records related to students are protected from disclosure under the federal law known as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Disclosing any personally identifiable student education records through social media sites is a violation of FERPA. Information collected in connection with research may be protected under a Nondisclosure Agreement, research protocol, or other applicable law or agreement. Any protected information must not be disclosed through social media. Adhere to all applicable school privacy and confidentiality policies. Account administrators who share confidential information do so at the risk of disciplinary action or termination.

Members of the school community may not, using Loomis Chaffee social media accounts, promote or endorse a candidate for public office.

**Creating meaningful content:** Social media sites are effective when the administrator generates interesting and interactive content and builds relationships with the online community. Regular and timely updates and discussions are key to building your community. Respond to comments and posts that tag your account. Plan content ahead of time, especially around major events for your program. Be authentic in the voice and content of your posts. Be thoughtful and careful in the creation and proofing of your post, taking into account general punctuation, tone, audience, and the alignment of the post with the Loomis Chaffee mission. Having posts reviewed and proofed is advised before posting. If a mistake is made, correct the error immediately.

**Permissions:** Your channel administrator will create a policy guide regarding approvals and oversight required before posts go live.

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**Personal use:** Only Loomis Chaffee social media accounts and other electronic platforms should be used to share the views of or officially market on behalf of the School. A School employee may not create or post personal social media content that implies that the content is on behalf of or is endorsed by the School. If an employee maintains a personal blog, website, or social media account(s) and identifies himself or herself as a Loomis Chaffee community member, that employee should be clear that his or her views are personal views, and that those views are not necessarily those of the institution. A disclaimer might be appropriate, such as, “The views expressed here are mine alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Loomis Chaffee.” School employees are personally responsible for the content they publish on their own social media sites and the sites of others.

**Using photos in your posts:** Images enliven your message and expand your reach. You are welcome and encouraged to use photos shared on the official Loomis Chaffee’s social media platforms and owned by the school on your social media accounts. Do not take or use photos from the Internet for School promotional purposes unless you have permission from the individual who has ownership of the photo. It is standard practice to contact another social media user to request one-time permission to re-use his or her work on the account you administer with proper attribution. (This does not include reposting, for example, which is allowed without permission for accounts whose owners have them listed as public.)

**Responding to comments:** Be respectful of other individual’s opinions. Having thoughtful discussions on important topics builds your community and contributes to your account’s success. It is general practice to leave up user comments that do not provide false, misleading, defaming, obscene, or illegal content. If such comments happen, the administrator is advised to take the comment down; message the individual (if appropriate) to build awareness so this does not happen again; ban the user (if necessary); and respond to the overall audience (if necessary). For advice, please contact the social media manager, Makhala Huggins (makhala\_huggins@loomis.org). For issues of illegality, please contact the legal office.

**Increase the conversation:** You are encouraged to follow other social accounts created by Loomis Chaffee units. Listening to their conversations, liking and share their posts with your audiences, and learning from their best practices will enhance your accounts. Together, we can create a holistic view for our audiences of our school’s mission, people, personality, and influence.

## RESOURCES

The Loomis Chaffee Office of Strategic Marketing and Communications can offer assistance with training, establishing tone and scope of content, understanding your audience, cross-promotion on Loomis Chaffee social channels, social goals and strategy, scheduling of posts, and content creation. Please contact Makhala Huggins (makhala\_huggins@loomis.org) to make a request.

*Updated September 2023*

*Guidelines are subject to change.*