This summary of CEEB scores shows the number of applicants, the percent offered admission, and the number expected to enter the class of 1977 (last of last spring) in each test score interval. The figures, according to the Admissions office, which supplied them, indicate that there is no definite cut-off figure for admission. See story below for further details.

SAT drop at MIT not significant

(Continued from page 1) abilities developed over long periods of time, whereas the Achievement tests measure competence in a particular subject gained in the short term.

How much of each one of these abilities developed over long periods of time, whereas the Achievement tests measure competence in a particular subject gained in the short term.

Achievement tests measure competence in a particular subject gained in the short term. Achievements developed over long periods of time, whereas the Achievement tests measure competence in a particular subject gained in the short term.

These tests as a way of comparing kids to sort out today's kids.

Along with the nationwide decline, the median test scores for both MIT's applicant pool and the admitted classes have declined somewhat. "There was a peak in our median math achievement scores in the class of 1974," Richardson said. He added that the median score for the class of 1977 was about 25 points lower than that for the class of 1974. Still, "for all MIT applicants, the median has only been higher (than that of last year's applicants) for three out of the past ten years."

"Test scores are only a portion of the selection process at MIT - admittedly an important one, but only a portion."

Richardson explained the nationwide decline by saying, "High school curricula in 1960 were very well defined; they hadn't changed much since 1920. Now, however, curricula are much more flexible, and it's harder to write a one-hour test to sort out today's kids."

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He continued, "It's been said that we measure the easily quantifiable so well that we lose the real significance of that which is not quantifiable."

In deciding whom to admit, Richardson said, "we don't rely strictly on the tests. High school grades and activities, teacher recommendations, and interviews are also important. We're looking for those quantities that make you say somebody is special rather than just smart." As can be seen in the accompanying chart, over a quarter of the applicants with scores of 750 or higher on the SAT math or math Achievement tests were rejected by MIT. "We've been turning down many high-scoring students for years," Richardson noted.

Although the SAT and three Achievement tests are required for admission to MIT as an undergraduate, some graduate departments at MIT do not require any standardized tests at all. "The graduate school gets applicants from a much smaller number of sources," Richardson explained. "They generally know more than we do about the schools their applicants attended, so their applicants' grades are more useful. For undergraduate admissions, we need tests as a way of comparing kids from different environments."

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