MIT applications rise; others' fall

By Sam Cable

About 1,600 high-school seniors applied to MIT this year, the highest number ever, according to Director of Admissions Peter H. Richardson '48. The number of applications is decreasing at many colleges around the country.

In contrast, 43 per cent of approximately 200 recently surveyed schools reported fewer applications by last December than they had at the same time a year earlier. In a survey last year, only 30 per cent of the schools had a drop in applications.

The schools hardest hit by decreases were large private schools and small public colleges. Half of the private institutions with an enrollment over 10,000 and over 50 per cent of the public schools with enrollment under 10,000 reported decreases.

Overall, the total number of freshmen applications increased this year by 6 per cent. The National Center for Education Statistics estimated that enrollment would increase less than two per cent but such slight estimated increases could disappear before the fall.

"The demographics are very clear. There are just fewer kids around now," said Richardson. "The question is just where they will apply."

"This was a slight increase over last year, which had been our biggest year," he said.

According to the Census Bureau, there are 1.4 per cent fewer 18-year-olds this year than last, and 4.7 per cent fewer than in the peak year of 1979. In addition to the decreasing applicant pool, many educational officials warn that more college students will not be able to afford to stay in college.

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