MIT increases aid to Boston schools

By Sam Cable

MIT and 24 other Boston area colleges have agreed to participate in a program to increase their assistance to Boston area public secondary schools.

Each participating university will contribute to a system-wide, district-wide, or single-school basis, according to Alford Dyson Jr., director of the MIT Secondary Technical Educational Project.

MIT will increase its involvement with the Mario Umana High School, a public school with advanced programs in mathematics and sciences, Dyson said.

Each participating college and university must write a "very specific letter of agreement," stating with advanced programs in mathematics and sciences, Dyson said.

"We will write a very specific letter in March on what MIT plans to do, contingent on funding," he said.

Umana High School will present MIT a list of needs which it believes MIT could fulfill, Dyson said. "Then we will see which needs MIT can meet, or which needs MIT can meet together," he said.

"Much is contingent on funding," he said. The federal government allocates $67,000 each year in "desegregation funds" to MIT, which can be used toward the project.

The Institute participated in the creation of the Mario Umana High School in 1974, and assists in staff development, curriculum implementation, and testing and evaluation at the school, Dyson said.

All colleges participating in the program will help develop better secondary educational programs for Boston public school graduates entering college, Dyson said. The research will be centered at Simmons College, he said.

"Simmons is trying to do research to find out what colleges have to do to keep the students they get," he said. Many Boston high school graduates are "...much like minorities on any campus not finding a support system designed for them," Dyson said.

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