

# Marlborough

August 2020

There are many factors that led to Marlborough's decision to move away from using the ISEE/SSAT in our evaluation of applicants.

The first is that we come to know an applicant through her application, school records, teacher and administrative recommendations, and in-person meetings. We tailor our process so that it allows us to have multiple touchpoints with a family. Marlborough's application process requires many pieces of data that inform our admissions decisions and ISEE/SSAT scores have never determined whether or not a student is admitted to Marlborough.

Then, in August, 2019, Marlborough School's Board of Trustees embarked on a Strategic Planning process that would lead the school through 2025. What became apparent through the many, many conversations that took place with employees, parents, students, Trustees, and alumnae during the 2019-2020 school year was our community's strong desire to be more purposeful and transparent in how we prioritize equity in our community.

Although some argue that standardized testing is a leveler among students from diverse experiences, others recognize the inequities inherent in their use, including less familiarity with the test for those outside of the independent school community, and unequal access to resources for test preparation.

In addition, the anxiety surrounding the test in our process was becoming untenable with students and parents believing that these test scores were determining a student's admissions decision. This also was in opposition to our commitment to integrating health and wellness into our school culture.

Perhaps most important, our research into Marlborough's admissions process showed that the ISEE/SSAT scores did not contribute information to a student's application that was substantially different from what is found in other documents in her file. In short, we can make informed admissions decisions without these test scores.

Inspired by [Marlborough's Strategic Plan 2020-2025 Redefining Excellence](#) and Marlborough's Vision Statement *Equity Leads Education*, we felt emboldened and committed to take this important step towards bringing our Vision, Mission, and Values to life. If you have any questions, please feel welcome to contact me at [jeanette.woochitjian@marlborough.org](mailto:jeanette.woochitjian@marlborough.org).

Warmly,



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