

POSITION STATEMENT OF THE RANDOLPH MIDDLE SCHOOL SLT PARENTS
RE: REMOVING ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL IB STUDENTS

[This document summarizes input from the RMS parent community regarding CMS's consideration of eliminating current requirements that incoming IB Middle Years Program ("IBMYP") students must have EOG scores of 3 or higher. The points of view expressed here were compiled through discussions among the SLT and PTO Board parents, surveying those groups, and researching the relevant issues raised. It is intended to open a discussion with those at CMS currently working on the magnet assignment plans.]

The RMS SLT parents strongly endorse the continued use of academic requirements for the IBMYP that ensure all students are performing at or above grade level when they enter. The current proxy for this requirement is the minimum 3's required on EOGs. While the SLT believes that this existing metric is generally indicative of student performance, we are not opposed in principle to replacing the EOGs with another metric deemed to better ensure that students applying to the IBMYP are at or above grade level. The SLT is, however, strongly opposed to removing such a requirement altogether.

The parents of the RMS SLT are opposed to removing this requirement for the following reasons:

1. **RMS fills a need for CMS Families.** The IBMYP is used by CMS families as one of the primary options for accelerated learning programs after elementary school. For instance, there is no talent development program in CMS middle schools, and nearly 40% of RMS students are TD certified. A short survey was taken of the SLT and PTO Board at Randolph Middle (see attached). There were 42 respondents (6 of whom were teachers).
 - 93% regard the MYP as "academically accelerated."
 - 100% said that the EOG minimum requirement was either "very important" or "extremely important" to the IBMYP (86% answered "extremely").
 - Parents (36) were asked if they would have applied to the MYP with no minimum EOG requirement in place - 91% replied either "no" (33%) or "not sure (58%)."

The Randolph SLT believes that the great majority of families applying for and enrolling in the CMS MYP are choosing it primarily for the accelerated academics it offers their children.

2. **RMS is a richly diverse school.** RMS SLT unequivocally endorses CMS's efforts to build socioeconomic and racial diversity in all programs, and give CMS families choices of the programs in which to enroll their children. 'Promotion of diversity' and 'minimum academic standards' are not mutually exclusive, as there are large populations of students across all demographics that are "at or above grade level" and seeking accelerated programs. RMS 2016 data for RMS shows:
 - Ethnic/racial composition
 - 13% are Asian
 - 20% are Hispanic
 - 27% are African American
 - 36% are white

- Socioeconomic composition of the 2016-17 6th grade class (using the new Tier system)
 - 17% are from Tier 4 schools (lowest socioeconomic classification)
 - 32% came from Tier 3
 - 30% came from Tier 2
 - 21% came from Tier 1

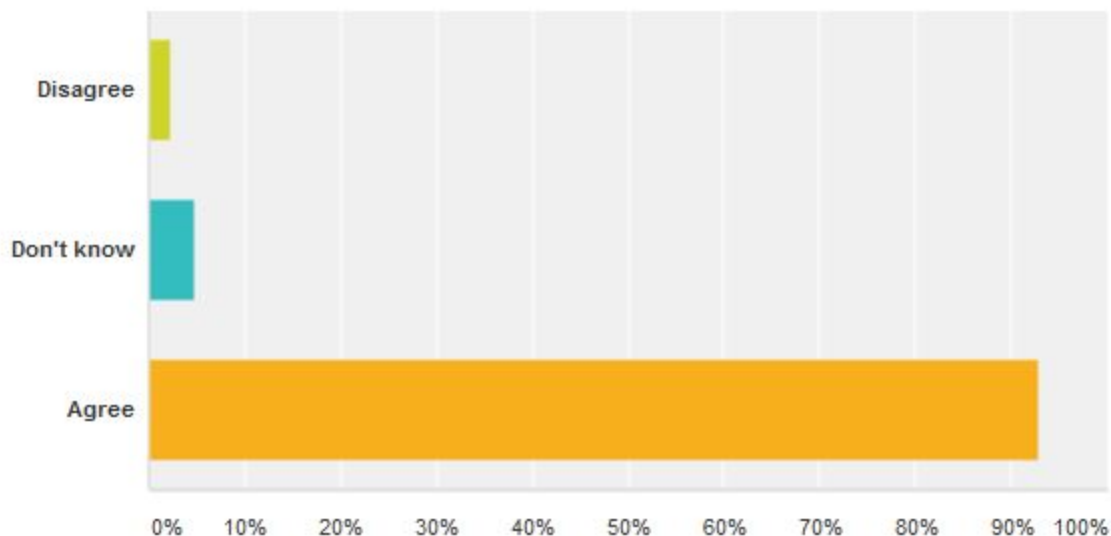
3. **Students entering the IBMYP performing below grade level are likely to struggle with the rigors of the program.** Students who are performing below grade level need remediation, which requires time. The IBO itself does not appear to have ever studied the program's efficacy with that population. A 2013 independent study of at-risk students within an IBMYP noted that the program "was not developed to remediate basic skills." (Kobylinski-Fehrman, M.J.)

CMS's IB program description places "emphasis on advanced study skills, including time management, goal setting, advanced research skills, test-taking, note-taking, and independent study." In addition to "intensive study of core subjects," the program requires study of a second language, research assignments and community service outside of school. That is a good description of the IBMYP in CMS middle schools and it does not lend itself to significant remedial work with those students who enter the program performing below grade level.

4. **Using minimum academic requirements to bolster student success and program integrity is not unique to the CMS's IBMYP.** Entrance requirements are appropriately used in other CMS magnet programs to help build a student population capable of performing the work and flourishing in that program. Language immersions require a foreign language assessment if entering after kindergarten and minimum of score of 3 on the reading EOG to continue into 6th grade. STEM programs require a minimum of three on the math EOG to enter (and remain after) 5th grade. Entrance requirements similar to CMS's are also used in IBMYP's elsewhere around the country. A cursory internet search showed them in Chicago, Broward County, Florida and Tulsa, for example.
5. **De-emphasizing academic rigor and acceleration in the middle school MYP will have negative effects on CMS's high school IB programs.** There is no question that the IB program in high school is academically accelerated. The 9th and 10th grade MYP is on a curve of higher expectations, and for those students who choose to enter the highly demanding IB Diploma Program in 11th grade, the MYP is the primary preparation for the challenges of those last 2 years. One of the concerns of the SLT parents is that, in the absence of an "at or above grade level" requirement, many accelerated students and their families will choose some other track in middle school (within or outside CMS) and the result will be falling enrollment in the high school IB programs. (See answers to survey question #4).

The IB program at Randolph Middle School is academically accelerated.

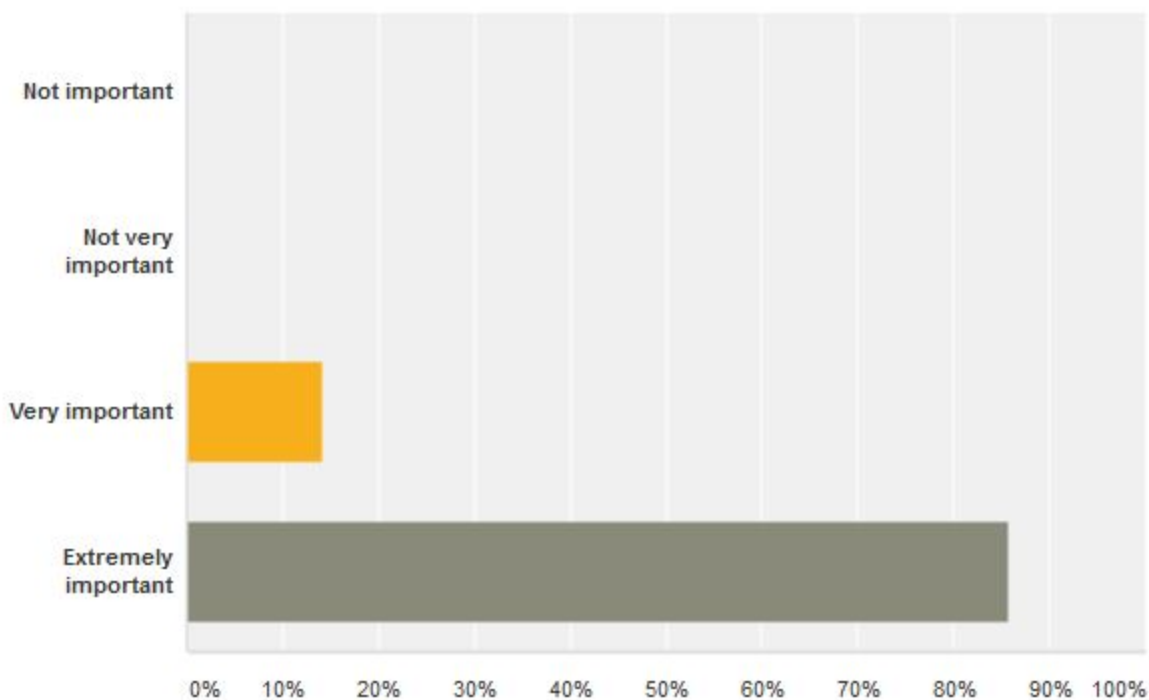
Answered: 42 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
▾ Disagree	2.38% 1
▾ Don't know	4.76% 2
▾ Agree	92.86% 39
Total	42

How important is it to you that students admitted to the RMS IB program must have a minimum of 3 on their EOGs?

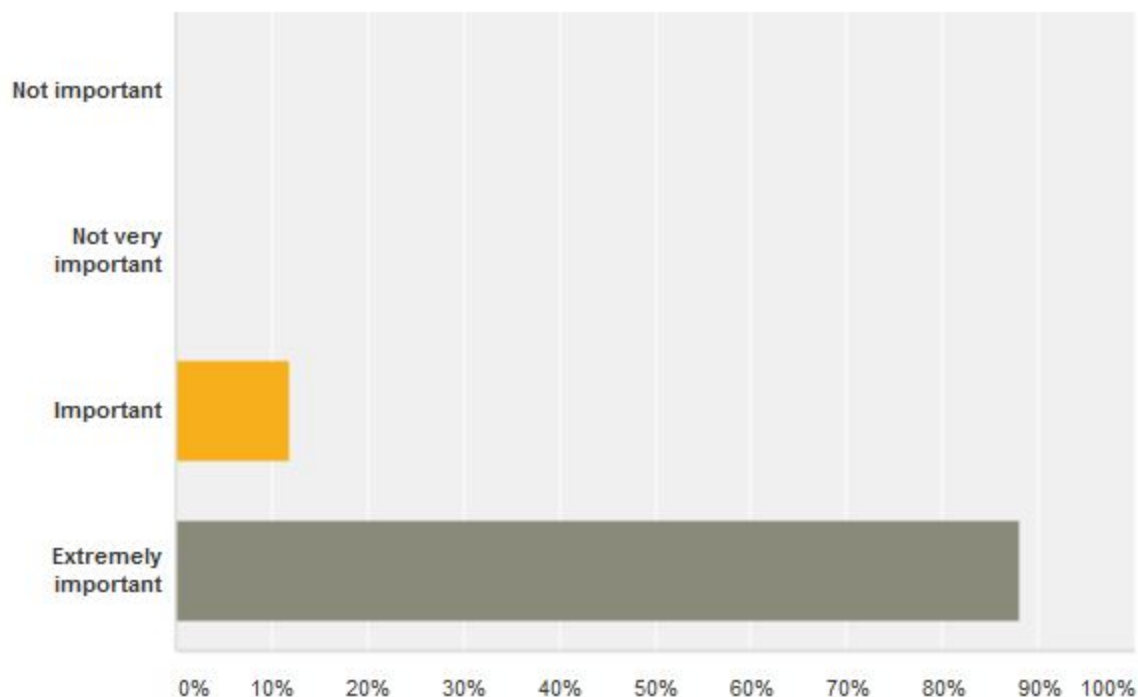
Answered: 42 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
Not important	0.00% 0
Not very important	0.00% 0
Very important	14.29% 6
Extremely important	85.71% 36
Total	42

How important do you feel that the admission requirement of a minimum EOG score of 3 is to the instructional program at RMS Middle School?

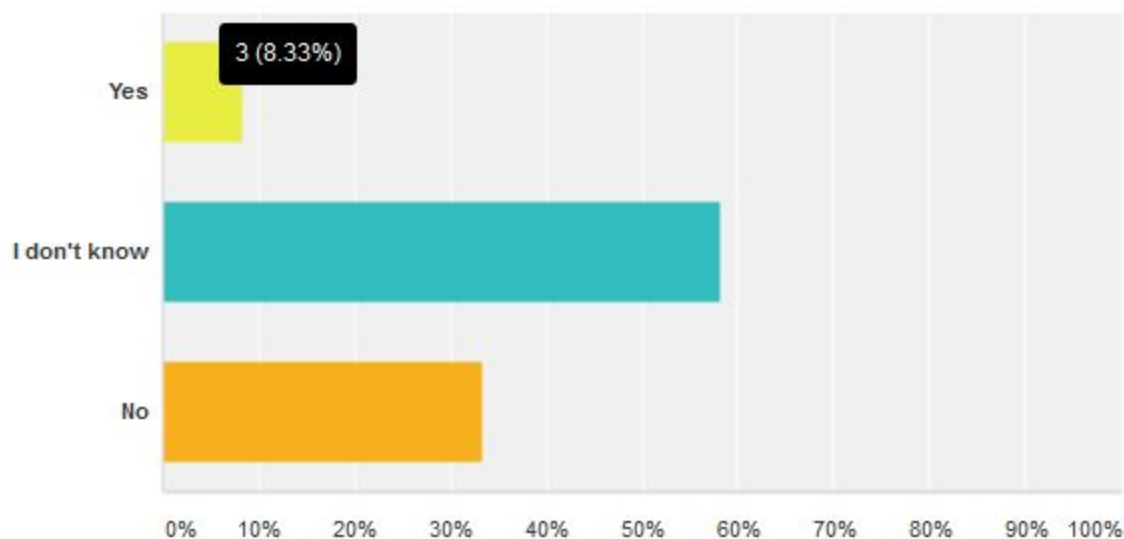
Answered: 42 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
Not important	0.00% 0
Not very important	0.00% 0
Important	11.90% 5
Extremely important	88.10% 37
Total	42

(FOR PARENTS ONLY) If there was no minimum EOG score required for admission when you were originally considering middle schools, would you have applied to the IB program?

Answered: 36 Skipped: 6



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	8.33% 3
I don't know	58.33% 21
No	33.33% 12
Total	36