

Published in the New York Times, September 29, 2013

Private School Admission

To the Editor:

Re “[Private Schools Likely to Drop an Entrance Test](#)” (front page, Sept. 20):

At the Bank Street School for Children, the admissions process for our youngest applicants has never depended upon the E.R.B. exam or on any other standardized test.

Issues of test preparation aside, as educators who believe deeply in our school’s progressive philosophy of education, we have long understood that a standardized test score can only narrowly and unfairly define a 4- or a 5-year-old, especially given the broad spectrum of human development at such a young age.

Careful and informed observations of a child — both individually and in small groups — allow us to begin to understand that child’s innate curiosity and how he or she approaches both academic problems and social interactions.

That process is a more legitimate and successful assessment of a child’s readiness for school and, for us, has always been the preferable alternative to a standardized test.

ALEXIS S. WRIGHT Dean, Children’s Programs Bank
Street College of Education New York, Sept. 21, 2013