

Schools to cut back reading program

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【摘要】 In 2006, Mass Public Schools top administrators have decided to stop elementary school teachers from allotting class time for an independent reading program that tests students comprehension and vocabulary skills through computer quizzes. Instead, the Accelerated Reader program, used to encourage children to read, will only be allowed during free-time such as lunch, clubs and before or after school. The changes take effect next fall. The district has found that reading and writing scores on standardized tests such as AIMS are not improving enough, and district administrators say research shows direct teacher instruction, not independent reading, is the most critical factor that increases a child's reading ability.

【关键词】 Independent-reading program

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Mass Public Schools top administrators have decided to stop elementary school teachers from allotting class time for an independent reading program that tests students comprehension and vocabulary skills through computer quizzes. Instead, the Accelerated Reader program, used to encourage children to read, will only be allowed during free

time such as lunch, clubs and before or after school. The changes take effect next fall. The district has found that reading and writing scores on standardized tests such as AIMS are not improving enough, and district administrators say research shows direct teacher instruction, not independent reading, is the most critical factor that increases a child's reading ability. Some parents and teachers are upset, arguing that the program helps kids and required a big financial investment that should not be abandoned. Lucy Calkins, a professor in the Teachers College of Columbia University, said research does not show that direct instruction is superior to independent reading.

"It's a no-brainer that the kids who read a lot score better," Calkins said.

Three years ago, public schools in New York City adopted an approach to reading instruction that put independent reading at the heart of the curriculum. The result, Calkins said, is that no school district has seen a greater improvement in reading scores than New York. Reading scores in Boston improved when independent reading was emphasized, and Washington

