

What Americans like best about their favorite teachers



(freepik.com)

What attribute do Americans find most compelling in the teacher they have identified as having the greatest impact on their lives?

I learned the answer recently when I was listening to a speech by Brandon H. Busteed, the executive director of Gallup Education, about public education and what polls show about how Americans view their teachers.

He noted that a strong majority of Americans say they have trust and confidence in public school teachers (even if many school reformers don't). He also said that when asked to describe the teacher who had most affected their lives, the attribute that was seen as most important wasn't smart or demanding but, rather, "caring."

The 2012 Gallup study, titled "[Public education in the United States: A nation divided](#)," said this:

Over 40% of Americans describe the teacher who had the most positive influence in their lives with words such as caring, compassionate, motivating, and inspiring; while just 17% of Americans thought intelligent, knowledgeable, persistent, hard-working, and demanding were words that describe the teacher who had the strongest influence on them.

I'd like to see how teacher evaluations linked to student standardized-test scores measure for "caring."