

Do Master's Degrees Make a Difference in Teacher Effectiveness? A Brief on the Evidence in North Carolina and the United States

- Every year since 2005, students whose teachers have Master's degrees have scored higher on the National Assessment of Educational Progress math and reading exams than those whose teachers have a Bachelor's degree.
- NC high school students taught by teachers with a Master's degree show significantly higher test scores in math and English than students taught by teachers with a Bachelor's degree.
- A large number of North Carolina students with higher math and reading scores were more likely to be taught by teachers with Master's degrees than those teachers without Master's degrees.
- Teachers with Master's degrees were found to be as effective as teachers with more experience without master's degrees.

Related Evidence:

- Generally, increased levels of preparation for teachers contribute to higher achievement of students.
- Effective preparation includes undergraduate and graduate training in content and pedagogy. Training in either content or pedagogy without the other is ineffective.
- More years of teaching experience combined with professional development, including earning a master's degree, contributes to higher achievement of students.
- Teachers with higher salaries and teachers with Master's degrees remain in teaching longer.

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