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Poverty and education: A teacher's perspective

Summary of the findings of the focus group research
(conducted in April to June, 2010)

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Introduction

In 2009, 100,000 children in British Columbia (BC) lived in families who have incomes below the after-tax poverty line, with BC having the highest child poverty rate in Canada (First Call, 2011). Income inequality is also increasing among BC families (First Call, 2010), a trend that has emerged in Canada and the United States (Canadian Council on Social Development, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, & Red Por Los Derechos de la Infancia en Mexico, 2008; Fleury, 2008).

These figures tell us that thousands of BC families are struggling economically, whose children are dealing with the effects of poverty at home and at school. While considerable research exists on the extent of and factors contributing to family poverty in Canada¹, less is known about how teachers in BC public schools perceive the effects of poverty on students, how they respond to poverty in the classroom, and what teachers view as necessary to support students to overcome educational barriers related poverty.

The pilot study explored the impact of poverty on students in British Columbia public schools, from a teacher's perspective. A qualitative research design consisting of focus-group methodology was used to explore the perceptions of teachers on how poverty affects students' opportunities to fully participate and succeed at school, and to elicit their ideas as to what is needed in the classroom, school and community to support students and families to overcome educational barriers related to poverty.

This report provides a summary of the main themes that were identified in the analysis of the focus group data on teacher perceptions of 1) how poverty affects student learning and participation in school activities, 2) challenges encountered and strategies used to support students to overcome educational barriers related to poverty and 3) recommendations for what is needed in the classroom, school, and community to support low-income students and their families to overcome educational barriers related to poverty. The report concludes with a brief summary of actions taken by the social justice teachers involved in the research, after the focus groups were completed.

¹ For a review of BC and Canadian reports documenting child poverty, see White, M. (2009) *Students are not to blame: Understanding the structural causes of poverty*, BCTF Research Report. For an in-depth analysis of the causes of child poverty in Canada, see Albanese, P. (2010). *Child Poverty in Canada*. Don Mills Ontario: Oxford Press.

Poverty and education: A teacher's perspective

Summary of the findings of the focus group research

Prepared by Margaret White (BCTF Research) in collaboration with Ilse Hill, Stacey Kemp, and Julia MacRae (Poverty Action Group of the BCTF Committee for Action on Social Justice); and Linda Young (VESTA Anti-poverty Committee).

Background to the project

In the spring of 2010, BCTF Research conducted a pilot study to explore poverty and education from a teacher's perspective, in collaboration with the Poverty Action Group of the BCTF Committee for Action on Social Justice and the Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association (VESTA) Anti-poverty Committee.

Study design

This pilot study is an exploratory investigation into the nature of poverty and education issues in BC public schools. A qualitative research design consisting of focus-group methodology was used to explore the perceptions of teachers on the effects of poverty on the learning experience of students, and to elicit their input as to what is needed to support low-income students to fully participate and succeed at school.

The teacher representatives involved in the study participated in the development of research objectives, study questions, recruitment of study participants, focus-group facilitation, debriefing after the focus groups, and feedback on the research findings. Margaret White, research analyst with the BC Teachers' Federation, co-facilitated the focus groups with the teacher social justice representative from either the BCTF or the VESTA poverty action groups. The focus groups were conducted in four BC school districts, Vancouver, Surrey, Okanagan Skaha (Penticton), and Alberni (Port Alberni), between April and June of 2010.

Research questions

The questions in the first part of the focus group meeting explored the meaning of child poverty and the effects of poverty on students, from a teacher's perspective. Teachers were also asked about the strengths they observe in students dealing with poverty, the strategies they find helpful to support students in overcoming educational barriers related to poverty, and the challenges they encounter as teachers.

The second part of the focus group explored in depth what is needed in the classroom, the school, and the community to support low-income students to fully participate and succeed at school. Participants recorded their ideas independently, prioritized them, and posted their ideas about what is most needed on a flip-chart, with one sheet for each area—in the classroom, in the school, and in the community. This was followed by an open group discussion of the ideas, facilitated by the teacher co-facilitator for the focus group.

Socio-economic characteristics of participating school districts²

The focus groups were conducted in four BC locations: Vancouver, Surrey, Penticton (Okanagan Skaha School District), and Port Alberni (Alberni School District). Surrey and Vancouver districts have the largest student population of all BC school districts, and about half of their students have a primary language other than English spoken at home (Surrey—44.5% and Vancouver—51%).

In contrast, Okanagan Skaha and Alberni have very small student populations relative to Vancouver and Surrey. Penticton is a small city in a semi-rural area, whereas Alberni is more of a rural/remote region. Aboriginal³ students comprise a much higher proportion of students in Alberni (30.7%) than the province (10.5%), and a much lower proportion in Vancouver (3.6%) and Surrey (4.6%). The proportion of Aboriginal students in Okanagan Skaha (10.8%) is about the same as the provincial average (10.5%). Less than 3% of students in Okanagan Skaha and Alberni districts have a primary language other than English spoken at home.

In 2005, after-tax family poverty rates⁴ for female lone-parent families in Port Alberni (22.9%) and Penticton (24.2%) were at or above average compared to BC (22.7%, excluding Vancouver), although lower than the Vancouver metropolitan census area (28.5%). A much higher proportion of couples with children lived in poverty (after-tax) in the Vancouver metropolitan area (12.8%) than in Penticton (3.7%) or Port Alberni (2.7%).

Study participants

Teacher characteristics

Twenty-nine teachers participated in the focus groups. A mix of classroom and specialist teachers attended the focus groups—52% were classroom teachers only, 27% were specialist teachers only (including Aboriginal Education, ESL, literacy/project or resource teacher, counsellor, and Learning Assistance), and 21% were both classroom and specialist teachers. Three-quarters of participants taught elementary grades, and the other quarter taught in middle (10%) or secondary (14%) grades. Only elementary teachers attended the Vancouver focus group, as this session was sponsored by the Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association (VESTA). Several of these teachers currently teach or have experience teaching in inner-city schools.

About one-third of participants (37.9%) described the socio-economic context of their school as mostly low-income, 37.9% as mixed incomes and 29.7% as mostly middle income. One in four participants (24.1%) viewed teachers and staff at their school as being “quite aware” and 13.8% as “very aware” (13.8%) of the effects of poverty on students. Over half (55.2%) of participants rated the amount of resources available at the school to address the needs of students living in poverty as inadequate (not very adequate—55.2%, not at all adequate —6.9%).

² The student statistics reported in this section refer to BC public schools in 2009–10, extracted from the BC Ministry of Education report: *2009/10 Summary of Key Information*, pp. 11, 15, and 17. See <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reporting/docs/ski.pdf>

³ The ministry defines an Aboriginal student as “a student who has self-identified as being of Aboriginal ancestry”. See *2009/10 Summary of Key Information*, p. 10.

⁴ Family poverty data for BC by city and family type. Retrieved from <http://firstcallbc.org/pdfs/EconomicEquality/1-BC%20Family%20Poverty%20stats%20by%20city.pdf>

Study results

Exploring the meaning of “child poverty”

At the start of the focus group, teachers were asked “What first comes to mind when you hear the phrase *child poverty*?” These are some of things teachers told us: Child poverty is both hidden and visible and knows no boundaries. Child poverty means not being able to concentrate due to hunger and lack of sleep or not having warm clothes when the weather turns cold. Or it can mean being teased for not having things, or being treated differently. Child poverty means coming to school worried or anxious, making it harder to learn. Child poverty is unfair and unjust.

Ways in which poverty can affect students in the school community

The focus group also asked teachers what they have observed about the effects of poverty on students. Teachers observed many ways in which poverty affects student learning and participation at school. Hunger was an issue that came up repeatedly in the focus groups. Hungry students have difficulty concentrating at school and are often tired. Poor nutrition can also adversely affect their behaviour. Teachers stressed the importance of offering subsidies for meal programs in such a way that those students are not singled out for participating. Schools varied greatly in their capacity to meet the needs of hungry students and in their subsidy procedures.

I see kids, and continue to see kids, coming to school not having had anything to eat, and so at times I've been making them breakfast because they just can't sit in the classroom to concentrate on what their class is working on because they are too hungry.

Gaps in skills and learning

Teachers expressed concern about the wide learning gaps between students, noting that many of the students with learning difficulties were also dealing with poverty issues. Primary teachers observed that students were often not ready for school in Kindergarten and needed additional support to build confidence and to adjust to being in a classroom setting. Some students and parents faced the additional challenge of language barriers, especially in Vancouver and Surrey, where over 40% of students speak a primary language other than English at home. Teachers described the wide range of developmental skills, language fluency, and special needs of students in a single classroom and the challenge this can pose for teachers when there are not adequate resources to address diverse learning needs.

Low attendance is a barrier faced by some students in developing their skills and fully participating at school. Teachers observed that some families living in poverty seemed to have difficulty getting young children to school consistently. The focus group discussion revealed that the reasons for low attendance are complex, with resources needed to address the barriers parents face (e.g., transportation, family illness, having other small children), as well as being sensitive to cultural issues and involving parents in such a way that they feel more positive about and connected to their child's school.

Teachers noticed that as students get older they often become more independent in terms of getting themselves to school, although older students sometimes miss school to look after younger siblings while the parents are at work. And some students work in paid employment to help support their family. A middle-school and a secondary teacher both commented on the

stress students are under from trying to keep up with homework after working long hours, or when their work schedule conflicts with their school schedule:

Because I teach at the high-school level, frequently older kids get asked to babysit or help out in whatever context is required at home, and so they're missing a lot of school and it puts them behind.

Well, because having a job affects attendance, I think their stress level would go up, anxiety around missing school, becoming farther and farther behind the other students, and then it's just a negative kind of spiral.

Students often appreciate what school has to offer

Attendance was not an issue for all students dealing with poverty. For some, school appeared to be a safe haven with teachers observing that low-income students tended to appreciate what the school had to offer, often arriving early and staying late, rarely missing a day of school. Some of these schools received extra funding to provide meal programs, after-school activities, and other programs to help build a strong sense of connection among students in the school community.

Teachers observed individual strengths in students dealing with poverty. Examples of strengths observed in some younger students include being able to verbalize their needs, showing sensitivity to the needs of other students, and recovering more easily from setbacks. Examples of strengths observed in some older students include students supporting and advocating for each other at school, showing resourcefulness, and having greater experience with and awareness of nature.

Some of these little kids that come that in my view are living in poverty have some pretty good resilience skills...they probably don't know they've got these resilience skills and they most certainly have not been taught how to develop them, but they just seem to bounce back from some situations that other kids just don't bounce back with that well.

Anxiety builds toward the school break

Teachers in both urban and rural areas noticed that anxiety starts to build in students dealing with poverty as the school break approaches. This may be in part due to losing access to regular school meals (where available), and access to the staff and school activities that form an important part of their social safety net during the school year. Some teachers suggested that some of this anxiety may also be due to discomfort when listening to more affluent students talk about exciting trips planned and/or expensive gifts they expect to receive during the school break.

When you start to get to the end of June or Spring Break is coming—it's just hard for them because school is almost their safe place and they know they've got our support and they're not quite aware of what they're going to be walking into.

Exclusion from field trips and school activities

School field trips can provide important enrichment opportunities for low-income students. But teachers noticed that some low-income students did not participate, either staying home the day of the field trip or making up a reason for not going. While schools offer subsidies for low-income students, teachers told us that parents may avoid applying for a subsidy if the process is hurtful or humiliating for them, or if they fear their child will be judged. Sometimes the student does not have the required equipment or clothing or the money to purchase what is needed, even though the fee is covered.

The only thing with the money issue is that often times it requires the parent to contact the school. And I'm finding that there are a lot of parents who are not willing to do that. They somehow feel that just making that phone call is creating a stigma for their child.

Some teachers observed that low-income students are sometimes excluded from extra-curricular activities for economic reasons, including club days at school (for those activities that require a fee, such as bowling), graduation events, and extra-curricular sports activities. While there is some financial assistance available to low-income students to participate in sports, families may not have transportation, adequate equipment, or be able to cover travel costs to attend out-of-town sporting competitions.

Strategies teachers found helpful

Teachers described many strategies they found helpful in supporting students and families dealing with poverty-related issues. Primary teachers emphasized the need to build social connections with parents so they feel welcome and involved and so teachers are more aware of resources most needed to support students. Caring, connecting, and showing empathy for students was also emphasized by teachers. Strategies primary teachers found helpful to address learning gaps include offering a structured approach with clear expectations, small-group learning, responding to emotional issues at the start of the day, confidence-building techniques, and positive reinforcement for attendance.

Making education meaningful and relevant to students was emphasized by middle/secondary teachers. Strategies include teaching meaningful content on classism, understanding the causes of poverty, creating an inclusive community, teaching to students' strengths and interests, increasing awareness of resources available to students, and empowering students to take control of their learning. Strategies to support students at risk of dropping out include identifying who these students are, asking "how we can help them to stay in school?", and building a sense of hope by finding concrete ways to help a student meet their goals.

Challenges encountered

Teachers encountered many challenges in supporting students and families dealing with poverty-related issues. Some students came to school with unmet health needs for vision care, treatment of ear infections, and poor nutrition. Some teachers observed that low-income families faced many barriers to accessing health-care services to address these needs:

I've noticed that especially this year we've come across quite a number of kids in our Kindergarten program with speech problems. And if we look back the kids

have ear infections that have not really been dealt with properly...maybe some of the families are not having the medical attention that they need.

Teachers told us that cuts to educational services mean there are fewer education assistants, youth/family workers, and learning specialist teachers available to support vulnerable students, making it more difficult to implement strategies to address learning gaps. Some teachers also reported difficulty getting non-designated “grey area” students assessed. Increasing class size lessened their ability to offer small-group learning. Some teachers expressed concern about how cuts to food programs in some schools will affect students’ well-being, their ability to learn, and their attendance.

Another challenge was dealing with the negative attitude of some members of the school community towards families in poverty. One teacher noted that the effects of labeling and stigmatizing can stay with students for life. Some teachers pointed to systemic problems in the way educators think about poverty and education, taking a “deficit” approach that focuses too much on what students lack instead of building on their strengths.

Building social connections and a sense of trust with parents whose childhood experiences in the education system were negative or damaging was also a challenge. Some schools offered programs to involve parents in positive ways, but found it difficult to get families to attend. Some teachers expressed the view that much of what the school system does to support students and families living in poverty is a “band-aid” approach, and is not getting at the underlying causes of poverty. As one teacher put it “Where does the role of the teacher stop? What is out there beyond our walls to help?”

What is needed in the classroom, school, and community?

An important reason for conducting this research was to learn from teachers what is needed to support low-income students and their families to overcome educational barriers related to poverty. Teachers who attended the focus group were asked to “Imagine what an ideal school community would look like if it had all the resources to support low-income students to fully participate and succeed at school. What would you put in the classroom, the school, and the community?”

Teachers shared many ideas about what they view is needed in the school, classroom, and community to create an inclusive, caring, and meaningful experience for low-income students and their families.

In the classroom

- **Creating an inclusive, caring, and meaningful classroom environment**

Many of the suggestions relate to creating a supportive, welcoming, and inclusive classroom environment. Teachers also told us that education should be meaningful to the experience of students dealing with poverty. Based on the discussion, a meaningful education challenges stereotypes and promotes understanding about poverty, builds on the strengths of students, fosters hope, is sensitive and responsive to cultural heritage, and addresses multiple skill levels.

Teachers also told us they would like to see resources to meet the basic needs of students in the classroom, such as food being available at all times for hungry students, and ample supplies so all students have the tools required to complete school work.

In the first part of the focus group, some teachers identified small group learning as an important strategy for addressing learning gaps. Teachers told us that what is needed in the classroom to facilitate small-group learning is additional staff resources, such as Special Education teachers and education assistants, as well as smaller class sizes.

In the school

- **Creating “schools of care”**

Creating “schools of care” emerged as a dominant theme in the responses to this question. Based on the discussion, “schools of care” would focus on social justice and social responsibility, build relationships with community, and have lots of caring adults to connect with students and families. Suggestions for involving families included having a drop-in space for parents and sponsoring family events to encourage positive connections with the school. Teachers told us they would also like to see more after-school programs for students (offered at no cost) such as cooking, sports, craft courses, and mentoring programs.

Teachers also made suggestions for what is needed in schools to support the physical and emotional needs of students. Suggestions included providing a school nurse to assist families with health concerns, professional services for students in need of emotional and behavioural support, and a quiet space for students when they needed to sleep or take a break. Schools also need to examine procedures for offering school-meal programs so that students do not feel stigmatized for using these programs.

Teachers in the focus groups indicated a need for a shift in instructional approaches at a school-wide level. Some teachers would like to see less emphasis on learning that is based on age and grade level. A few teachers suggested that schools offer a homework club to help address learning gaps, while another teacher suggested the school implement a “no homework” policy. Some teachers identified the need for schools to bring in resources such as First Nations educators and cultural support workers to support the development of culturally-meaningful education.

The focus groups revealed that many low-income students are excluded from field trips in subtle and indirect ways related to hidden costs of participating, and/or an unwillingness of families to use subsidy programs. Teachers told us that in order for students to fully participate, more funding is needed for field trips, and schools need to review subsidy policies to assess the extent to which these policies directly or indirectly discourage low-income students from participating in school events.

Some teachers spoke of the need to raise awareness about poverty-related issues within the school community by providing more opportunities for staff to learn about poverty and to share strategies that they find helpful in supporting students and families dealing with poverty. Some teachers spoke of the need to examine the values underlying current approaches to poverty and education, and to challenge approaches that focus primarily on the limitations of students instead of building on their strengths.

In the community

- **Building caring and meaningful community connections with children, youth, and families**

Teachers made several suggestions as to how the community could help to build social connections with and between families, such as community kitchens and gardens, family nights and weekend field trips, clothing exchanges, and offering programs of interest to parents. Some teachers emphasized the need for caring program leaders who are sensitive to poverty issues and are able to create emotionally safe and welcoming spaces.

Values emerged as an important aspect of community programs in the focus-group discussion. Teachers' comments suggest the community has an important role to play in providing programs that promote volunteerism, instill a sense of meaning and purpose, empower students, and create opportunities for skill development.

Other suggestions for how the community can support low-income students include providing free access to community sports programs/facilities for youth, and assisting with transportation, when necessary. Many teachers noted the need for affordable child care services in their community, including after-school child care.

The community also has a role to play in meeting the basic needs of students and families. Some teachers identified the need for more consultation between teachers, social workers, and social agencies involved with families. Improved access to dental, medical, and mental health services for families in need, including assistance with transportation, is also needed.

Finally, teachers recognized the importance of social-justice advocacy in raising awareness about poverty and addressing the underlying causes of poverty. The Living Wage Campaign, affordable housing, a national child care plan, and reduced tuition fees, are poverty-reduction strategies that teachers identified as important areas for education and advocacy.

Study limitations

This pilot study provides rich, in-depth information about the effects of poverty on students' school experience, and what is needed to support low-income students to fully participate and succeed at school. However, the focus groups captured minimal information on some student populations for whom family poverty rates are very high. For example, the focus groups generated some insights into issues faced by Aboriginal students and by families newly immigrated to Canada, but not enough information to explore these issues in-depth. As no Adult Education teachers participated in the pilot study, poverty issues related to adult learners remain unexplored. Secondary teachers were under-represented in the focus groups. This may be why the focus groups did not yield sufficient data to fully explore the impact of paid employment on the educational experiences and learning outcomes of low-income students. As these findings are based on the experience of 29 teachers in four regions, a larger survey is needed to assess how well these results represent the experience of BC teachers as a whole.

The purpose of this study was to explore poverty and education issues from a teacher's perspective. The voices of parents, students, and communities also need to be heard. In the next section of this report, two of the teachers involved in the study describe actions taken to broaden the discussion to families and community.

Where to from here?—Moving from research to action

We view this research as a starting point. We hope it helps to build empathy and understanding about students dealing with poverty and to bring about positive action towards building a more equitable and inclusive school community. The focus-group research served as a catalyst for further action in local communities.

Julia MacRae, focus-group facilitator and Surrey teacher, reported that some of the teachers who attended the focus group formed a Poverty Action Group at the Surrey Teachers' Association. Ilse Hill, focus-group facilitator and Port Alberni teacher, contributed an article to the *Teacher* newsmagazine, calling on teachers to mobilize for change:

In a focus group that I conducted in my community last year with BCTF researcher Margaret White, we asked teachers about the effects of poverty that we are observing in our classrooms and communities. Part of the exercise was to imagine the resources needed to have the “perfect” situation for our classrooms, schools, and communities. None of the responses offered could be considered unreasonable. Experienced teachers talked about the supports that used to be in place and the increasing burdens placed on children and families. It is time to use our professionalism to unite together and develop a plan of action to create systemic change.

While the intention of this project is to bring out a teacher's perspective on poverty and education, the voices of students, families, and community members also need to be heard. Stacey Kemp, a school psychologist, long-time social justice advocate on poverty issues, and a focus-group facilitator in Penticton, reported on an idea for a community forum that developed out of this research project:

One of the things that came up in the focus group was how we need to reach out more to the community. One of the quotes I like is “nothing about us without us,” meaning that we need to find out what our families living in poverty really need, instead of making assumptions about what we think they need. An idea that arose out of the focus group was having a community forum similar to the focus group. This forum would join the various community groups together and the goal would be to include those who often do not have a voice. This is something I would like to work towards in Penticton and School District 67 (Okanagan Skaha).

Linda Young, Chair of the Anti-poverty Committee for the Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association (VESTA), participated in a VESTA-sponsored research project, organized by a researcher (Marcy Cohen) and community organizer (Priti Shah) in partnership with the Living Wage Coalition and Frog Hollow and Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood house. They met with immigrant parents living on low incomes to hear about what parents found positive and supportive at school, what challenges they and their children face at school and in the community, and what schools can do to support children and parents with low incomes so that they have the opportunity to fully participate in all aspects of school life.

The Poverty Action Group of the BCTF Committee for Action on Social Justice is also using the research findings in a poverty and education workshop they are developing for BC teachers.

Future research

The purpose of the focus group research was to explore the impact of poverty on students in BC schools, from a teachers' perspective and to identify potential solutions to support students and families to overcome educational barriers related to poverty.

The preliminary findings of the focus group research were presented at BCTF conferences to elicit further feedback from teachers across the province. The feedback at the workshops helped to broaden our understanding of poverty and education issues.

The focus group findings and subsequent responses from teachers will provide the foundation for the development of a survey instrument in preparation for a provincial survey of BC teachers on Poverty and Education. The pre-testing of the questionnaire is currently underway.

Acknowledgments

We wish to thank the study participants for taking the time to attend the focus groups, and for sharing so generously their thoughts and concerns about poverty and education issues. We also wish to thank the BC Teachers' Federation and the Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association for supporting this research.

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- BCTF local teacher associations (Surrey, VESTA, Okanagan Skaha, Alberni)

Tables: Responses to the background questionnaire

Characteristics of teachers who participated in the focus groups

Table 1: Number and percent of participants by focus group location

Location of the focus group	Number	Percent of total
Vancouver	11	37.9%
Penticton	8	27.6%
Port Alberni	4	13.8%
Surrey	6	20.7%
Total	29	100.0%

Table 2: Number and percent of participants by grades taught

Grade level	Number	Percent of total
Primary (K-3)	12	41.4%
Intermediate (4-7)	4	13.8%
Elementary (K-3 & 4-7)	6	20.7%
Middle (6-8)	3	10.3%
Secondary (9-12)	4	13.8%
Total	29	100.0%

Table 3: Number and percent of participants by type of teaching position

Type of teaching position	Number	Percent of total
Classroom teacher only	15	51.7%
Special education only	3	10.3%
Both classroom and specialist teacher	6	20.7%
Specialist teacher - more than one specialty	3	10.3%
Counsellor	1	3.4%
District helping teacher	1	3.4%
Total	29	100.0%

Table 4: Number of teachers in each teaching area

Type of teaching position	Number of teachers
Classroom teacher	21
Special education	6
ESL	6
Learning Assistance	1
Aboriginal Education	4
Counsellor	1
Subject specialist	1
District Helping teacher	1
Literacy or Project teacher and/or Resource teacher	2

Note: The 29 teachers in the study worked in a total of 43 teaching positions.

Socioeconomic context of the school, level of awareness of poverty in the school, and adequacy of resources to address poverty issues

Table 5: How would you describe the family income levels in your school community?

Socio-economic context of the school	Number	Percent of total
Mostly low income	11	37.9%
Mostly middle income	6	20.7%
Mixed incomes	11	37.9%
Teach in 2 schools – one low, one middle	1	3.4%
Total	29	100.0%

Table 6: Overall, how aware are teachers and other staff of the effects of poverty on students and families in your school? (1=not at all aware and 5=very aware)

Level of awareness	Number	Percent of total
1.00 Not at all aware	0	00.0%
2.00 Not very aware	5	17.2%
2.50 *	2	6.9%
3.00 Somewhat aware	11	37.9%
4.00 Quite aware	7	24.1%
5.00 Very aware	4	13.8%
Total	29	100.0%

*Value written in by participant

Table 7: How adequate are the resources in your school to address the needs of students living in poverty? (1=not at all adequate and 5=very adequate)

Level of adequacy of resources	Number	Percent of total
1.00 Not at all adequate	2	6.9%
2.00 Not very adequate	16	55.2%
3.00 Somewhat adequate	6	20.7%
3.50 *	1	3.4%
4.00 Quite adequate	4	13.8%
5.00 Very adequate	0	00.0%
Total	29	100.0%

*Value written in by participant

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