

TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF POVERTY AND
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine teachers' perceptions about students from poverty and their academic achievement using the independent variable of the schools' free or reduced lunch population. Responses to the survey were separated into two groups: those from schools with 51% or more of students receiving free or reduced lunch, and schools with 50% or less of students receiving free or reduced lunch. Teachers' perceptions were the same on 36 of 47 survey responses. While differences did exist for 11 of 47 responses, the overall rankings and opinions were similar as high importance was given to parenting techniques, student behavior, and class sizes. Responses with significant differences pertained to mentoring, class size, ability grouping, parenting, and standardized testing. Of the four issues on the survey, the achievement gap ranked highest.