

Where Does Special Education Teacher (SET) Time Go?

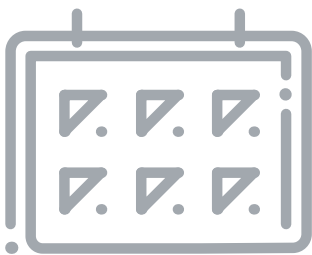
THE STATISTICS MAY SURPRISE YOU.

Almost **40%** of K-12 special educators reported spending **20%** or more of their time on paperwork.

This is the equivalent of a full SET work day or more per week.

Up to **7 weeks per school year** lost to paperwork. ⁽¹⁾

Paperwork can account for up to **50%** of SET time. ⁽²⁾



Due to other responsibilities, SETs tend to spend **less than 1/2 of the day teaching.** ⁽³⁾

3 ACTIVITIES ACCOUNT FOR NEARLY **1/2** OF A TEACHER'S DAY.

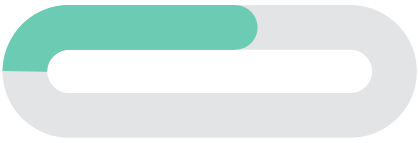
Academic Instruction 16%

Instructional Support 15%

Paperwork 12% 22%

Combined, paperwork, IEP meetings and collaboration/consulting with peers represented **22%** of an SET's day. ⁽⁴⁾

Some SET administrative activities take **over twice as long** as administrators think.



Administrators valuation



Actual time to complete⁽⁵⁾

SETs working in self-contained settings for students with emotional/behavioral disorder spent only

32%

of the school day on instruction.

Paperwork, collaboration and consultation, and IEP meetings took up to

18%

of the SET school day.⁽⁶⁾

US high school students only spend **27%** of their day on educational activities including time in class.



- ...and SETs are only able to
- spend about **20%** of class time
- on instruction.^(7,8)

CLASS TIME

Amount of time SETs spend on academic instruction.



20%

17%



Amount of time SETs spend on special and general education paperwork.

Amount of time SETs spend on assessment.



8%

Class time spent on assessment is **less than ½** of the class time spent on paperwork.⁽⁹⁾



TECHNOLOGY CAN HELP!

41%

of NASDE/OSEP survey respondents stated that improvements in managing IEPs were due to better technology being available.
(10)

Computer technology and data systems have reportedly helped ease some administrative burdens related to Special Education requirements.

– Quote from 2016 Government Accountability Office survey (11)

Sources

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³ Vannest, Kimberly J.; Hagan-Burke, Shanna (2009). *Remedial and Special Education* 31(2):126-142

⁴ Vannest, Kimberly J.; Hagan-Burke, Shanna (2009). *Remedial and Special Education* 31(2):126-142

⁵ Franz, Dana Pomykal; Vannest, Kimberly J.; Parker, Richard I.; Hasbrouck, Jan E.; Dyer, Nicole; Davis, John L. (2008). Time Use by Special Educators and How It Is Valued, *Journal of School Leadership*, v18 n5 551-576

⁶ Bettini, Elizabeth; Kimerling, Jenna; Park, Yujeong; Murphy, Kristin M. (2015) Responsibilities and Instructional Time: Relationships Identified by Teachers in Self-Contained Classes for Students With Emotional and Behavioral Disabilities, *Preventing School Failure: Alternative Education for Children and Youth*, 59:3, 121-128.

⁷ Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2006). *American Time Use Survey: Charts by Topic: Students*.

⁸ Vannest, Kimberly J.; Hagan-Burke, Shanna; Parker, Richard I.; Soares, Denise A. (2011). Special Education Teacher Time Use in Four Types of Programs. *Journal of Educational Research*, v104 n4 p219-230 2011

⁹ Vannest, Kimberly J.; Hagan-Burke, Shanna; Parker, Richard I.; Soares, Denise A. (2011). Special Education Teacher Time Use in Four Types of Programs. *Journal of Educational Research*, v104 n4 p219-230 2011

¹⁰ Ahearn, Eileen. (2011). Paperwork in Special Education: Survey Findings. inForum. Project Forum. National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE).

¹¹ GA 1.13:GAO-16-25 (2016). Special education, state and local-imposed requirements complicate federal efforts to reduce administrative burden: report to congressional requesters.

Although the data used in this report has been produced and processed from sources believed to be reliable, we cannot ensure the accuracy, adequacy, completeness, legality, reliability or usefulness of any information. It is possible that reporting errors or inconsistencies between states and years may be present in this dataset.