

# Project Support: Special Education Teachers (SETs)



**Purpose:** Understand how special educators' working conditions contribute to their provision of strong instruction for elementary students with emotional/behavioral disabilities (EBD) in sub-separate (self-contained) classes.

## Why is *Project Support SETs* important?

To improve outcomes for students with EBD, we need to better understand which working conditions are most important in preventing special educators' burnout and attrition.

## What is *Project Support SETs*?

*Project Support SETs* examines special educators' working conditions, and how their working conditions contribute to the quality of their reading instruction in sub-separate classes for students with EBD and to reading achievement growth for students with EBD

## How will *Project Support SETs* benefit our district & schools?

You will gain insights into how you are currently supporting special educators, and strategies you could use to improve these supports.

## Who is Conducting *Project Support*?

Dr. Elizabeth Bettini is an Assistant Professor at Boston University's School of Education. She previously taught students with EBD in sub-separate classes in Tucson, Arizona and New London, Connecticut. She studies how schools can support special educators in providing stronger instruction, especially for students with EBD. Dr. Bettini has won several awards for her research, including a dissertation award from the Council for Exceptional Children and recently, an award from the Lives of Teacher sig of the American Educational Research Association. She can be contacted at [lbettini@bu.edu](mailto:lbettini@bu.edu).

Dr. Bettini is conducting *Project Support SETs* in collaboration with Dr. Hannah Mathews (Boston University), Dr. Nathan Jones (Boston University), and Dr. Stephen Smith (University of Florida). *Project Support SETs* is funded through a grant administered by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences.

## Who will participate in *Project Support SETs*?

- Special educators in elementary school sub-separate classes for students with EBD.
- Students with EBD will participate in reading achievement assessments

## What will *Project Support SETs* require of our district & schools?

- District staff will support recruitment of eligible special educators.
- Students with EBD will take reading achievement assessments 2 times.
- Special educators will be observed 3 times.
- Special educators will complete 3 surveys.
- Special educators will complete the experience sampling log, to evaluate their time use, on 10 randomly selected days throughout the year.

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q:** Could *Project Support SETs* could make my district and schools look bad?

**A:** No! We are not looking to identify weaknesses, but rather ways special educators are currently supported, and how supports could be strengthened. Publications and presentations will use pseudonyms to keep your town, your district's identity, and the identities of all participants strictly confidential. We will share all presentations and publications with you.

**Q:** Will special educators be compensated for their participation in *Project Support SETs*?

**A:** Yes. We will compensate teachers \$100. Students will be compensated with a small prize for their participation in the assessments.

**Q:** In my district, special educators in these settings are already doing a great job and feel well-supported. Is my district eligible to participate in *Project Support SETs*?

**A:** Yes, your district is definitely eligible. We want to learn what you are doing!

**Q:** All students with EBD in my district are in inclusive settings. Can we participate?

**A:** That is wonderful! However, *Project Support SETs* is not relevant for you.

**Q:** If the district commits, does this mean that all teachers have to participate?

**A:** No! Every teacher has the right to individually decide whether to join the study.