

## SPECIAL EDUCATION PLAN

### SECTION 15: Specialized Equipment for Learning

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#### SPECIALIZED EQUIPMENT FOR LEARNING

The Board purchases personalized equipment which is provided for student use at school for instructional, care and mobility purposes. The board has a procedure that outlines in detail how to obtain individualized equipment for students: [TLDSB Procedure ES 5500: Specialized Equipment for Learning](#)

#### HOW IS EQUIPMENT REQUESTED?

Equipment can be requested for a need supported by an assessment report from the appropriate qualified regulated professionals.

Equipment requests are considered by an intake committee comprised of central specialized services staff.

For equipment requests which meet SEA [\(Special Equipment Amount\)](#) guidelines:

- The request includes a written recommendation by a qualified, regulated professional supporting the claim.
  - The report must include a diagnosis of the condition that requires the *essential* equipment to support the student's needs.
  - Recommendation by qualified professionals must state that it is *essential* for the student to have the equipment to access the Ontario curriculum and/or alternative curriculum.
- The Individual Education Plan (IEP) describes how the equipment would be used for the student in the school.
- No existing or similar equipment is available for the student in the system.
- The equipment does not provide safety risks to the student or others.
- The equipment is compatible with other board systems.

Approved requests are purchased through the central special education budget. An annual budget for equipment is established.

#### ROLE OF PARENTS/ GUARDIANS

Parents are important partners in education. Information from home will assist in appropriate programming and planning.

It is helpful to share copies of reports or assessments prepared by professionals who have supported your child with the school via the Special Education Resource Teacher or Head of Special Education. If there is a recommendation for specialized equipment in the report, then the Special Education Resource Teacher or Head of Special Education will follow the process for requesting this for your child.

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#### HOW IS THE EQUIPMENT FUNDED?

As part of its Funding Model, the Ministry of Education provides a per pupil amount to schools boards to assist in covering equipment costs.

The Ministry of Education further supports the purchase of adaptive (non-computer based) equipment which costs more than \$800 per student. In order to be reimbursed for the amount spent over \$800, school boards must pay the \$800 deductible amount and attest to compliance with the SEA Guidelines.

The Ministry of Education reserves the right to conduct a paper audit of the files submitted for consideration in the SEA process in the spring of each year, prior to the transfer of funds to the school board. This process would involve the review of a random sampling of 10% of the SEA files by a Ministry Education Officer.

#### MAXIMIZING OUR RESOURCES TO BENEFIT STUDENTS

We regularly monitor our Specialized Equipment for Learning budget and process, and we adjust practices to ensure we are maximizing efficiencies.

These efficiencies include:

- A reduction in the paperwork required for a Specialized Equipment Request, thus allowing the school staff more time devoted to direct service to students.
- A timely and efficient training model for students, EAs and classroom teachers has been implemented.
- We no longer purchase individual printers or scanners for students, except in unique situations as determined through consultation with the Superintendent of Learning with responsibilities for Specialized Services (or designate);
- Wherever possible, Ministry-licenced software will be provided to meet the specific needs of the student (ex. text-to-speech, word prediction and speech-to-text) rather than purchasing programs that present a significant cost to the board.
- Reassigned (gently used) computers or devices will be provided for new SEA claims where possible and where these items meet the documented needs of the student.
- Ongoing audits will occur to ensure technology is being used.
- A process for managing, reviewing, tracking and maintaining equipment is established at each school to ensure that every effort is made to prevent loss, damage and/or theft of equipment.