



## SPECIAL EDUCATION PLAN

### SECTION 15: Special Education Equipment

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#### SPECIAL EDUCATION EQUIPMENT

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, Personalized Special Education Equipment](#).

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 special education staff.

The following guidelines are used to determine equipment approvals:

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.
  - A three month trial of equipment must occur to provide evidence of essential need
- The Individual Education Plan 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.
- The total cost of the equipment is \$800 or over.

Equipment requests under \$150 are the responsibility of the school.

Equipment between \$150 and \$800 are the responsibility of the school board.

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

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	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014
<b>Computer Costs</b>	\$296,070.43	\$352,237.22	\$591,321.69
<b>SEA Claim</b>	\$135,779.38	\$114,086.77	\$181,506.02
<b>Under \$800</b>	\$6171.19	\$15,799.37	\$17,169.93
<b>Total Spent</b>	\$438, 021.00	\$482.123.36	\$789,997.64

The Ministry of Education provides grant monies to support equipment costs above \$800 per student per year through the SEA process. In order to qualify for this grant, school boards must provide an external recommendation from a specialist in the field of disability and a copy of the invoice verifying the payment and cost of each item, and an individual education plan that outlines how the equipment will be used with the student in the school.

It is the practice of the Ministry of Education 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. A random sampling of 10% of the SEA files are reviewed by a Ministry Education Officer.

The Ministry provides a written report to the school board with recommendation regarding improvement of SEA files. TLDSB will focus on:

- refining our IEPs to reflect measureable and attainable outcomes for students ;
- incorporating effective strategies to support students in accessing the curriculum;
- streamlining the SEA process and establishing key messages to reduce timelines between equipment recommendations and student access to equipment.

As part of its Funding Model, the Ministry of Education provides a per pupil amount to schools boards. Due to the significant decrease in available funds significant cost saving measures were established:

- Training for students, EAs and classroom teachers will be handled internally through Itinerant EA and Consultant support;
- Printers will no longer be purchased for students, except in unique situations as determined through consultation with the Special Education Technology Consultant and the Superintendent of Special Education;
- Wherever possible, programs of no cost to the board (Premier, Co-Writer and Dragon) will be provided to meet the specific needs (text to speech, word prompt and speech to text) of a student rather than programs that present a significant cost to the board (Kurzweil and word cue)
- Scanners will not be purchased except in unique situations (e.g. student who requires direct access to scanner but has a mobility disability);
- Reassigned (used) Laptops and Desktops will be provided for new SEA claims or renewals for students in grade 11 and 12;

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- Ongoing audits will occur to ensure technology is being used. If measures have been put in place that encourage and support the student use but they continue to resist the usage of the technology, consultation will occur with the parents/guardians and initiation of a “Discontinued Use of Equipment” will be explored;
- A process for managing, reviewing, tracking and maintaining equipment will need to be established at each school to ensure that every effort is made to prevent loss, damage and/or theft of equipment;
- When extensive equipment recommendations have been recommended, the need and ability to accommodate the equipment will be reviewed by the Special Education Technology Consultant and Superintendent through consultation of school staff and board professionals.;
- Equipment that is prescribed through professionals external to the board, where evidence or communication of a trial is not provided, will require a trial prior to approval for purchase.