



Instructional equipment and materials needed to support the delivery of special education programs and services are provided directly through grants from the Ministry of Education. Equipment costing \$800 or less is purchased from established budgets for special education. The special education budget is comprised of dollars from a variety of Ministry grants including: the Special Education Per Pupil Amount, Special Equipment Amount, High Needs Amount, and Special Incidence Portion as well portions of other grants provided to the Board. Equipment costing more than \$800 may be provided through application for Special Equipment Amount (SEA) funding, with the first \$800 provided through the Board.

1. Determination of Need

Student need for adaptive equipment and/or assistive technology is assessed by a variety of professionals dependent upon the type of equipment and the specific needs of the individual student.

- (i) Students with physical needs requiring standers, walkers, lifts, etc. are assessed by occupational and/or physiotherapists providing service to the child. These services are usually contracted through the Community Care Access Centres. The appropriate professional will make a written recommendation based on an assessment of the child's needs. The recommendation is submitted to the Special Education Co-ordinator responsible for the school in which the child attends. The Special Education Co-ordinator ensures that the SEA claim is complete and includes all the necessary documentation prior to ordering the equipment.
- (ii) Students requiring adaptive technologies for severe learning disabilities may have an assessment completed by a psychometrist, occupational therapist, or by a consultant from a provincial demonstration school. The Assistive Technology Team can assist in the preparation of the SEA claim prior to submission to the Special Education Co-ordinator.
- (iii) For students with hearing impairments, equipment needs are most often assessed and recommended by a qualified audiologist. SEA claims are prepared by the itinerant resource teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing and submitted to the Special Education Co-ordinator.
- (iv) For students with visual impairments, assessments and recommendations are completed by a qualified specialist in the field or through the consultative services provided by the W. Ross Macdonald Provincial School for the Blind in Brantford. The itinerant resource teachers of the blind and low vision assist in the preparation of the SEA claim prior to submission to the Special Education Co-ordinator.

For equipment needs that do not exceed \$800.00, the Board maintains budget lines specifically to meet these needs. Individual schools are allocated funds to maintain specific programs such as special classes for students with developmental disabilities and those who are medically fragile. Equipment purchases can be made from these funds as the School-based Team determines student needs.

2. Equipment Maintenance, Repair, and Adaptation

Budget lines are developed specifically for equipment maintenance and repair. Two Information Technology technicians assigned to special education, support computer hardware and software installation and provide troubleshooting services.

The Building Services Department of the Board also provides services by building and adapting equipment for students as the need arises. Chair stabilizers, change tables, slant boards, as well as facility changes for washrooms are examples of equipment needs that are met through our Building Services Department. Once a need is determined, the Special Education Co-ordinator for the school is contacted. If the required equipment is not available elsewhere then a request is submitted to Building Services.

3. Budgetary Allocation

For equipment under \$800.00, a variety of budget sources are accessed to meet determined needs. Individual school budgets as well as specific lines of the special education department budget as described earlier fund the purchase, maintenance, and repair of adaptive technology and specialized equipment.

For equipment over \$800.00, SEA claims are submitted through the following process:

- (i) referral for assessment determined by the School-based Team.
- (ii) assessment of need and recommendation for equipment completed by a qualified professional.
- (iii) the School-based Team completes an SEA claim with the assistance of the appropriate special education staff.
- (iv) SEA claim is reviewed by a Central Committee and forwarded to the SEA Clerk.
- (v) The SEA Clerk:
 - gathers any necessary quotations and processes the claim,
 - prepares purchase requisitions and forwards orders to the Purchasing Department,
 - keeps an ongoing record of all SEA equipment purchases.