

Section M: EQUIPMENT

FEEDBACK

[We value your feedback! Please click this feedback link to leave your suggestions/comments on the 2024-2025 Special Education Plan.](#)

Purpose of the Standard

To inform the ministry, board staff members and other professionals, and parents about the provision of individualized equipment for some students with special needs

Specialized Equipment Allocation (SEA) Funding

The Specialized Equipment Allocation (SEA) funding from the Ministry of Education assists with the costs of equipment essential to supporting students with special education needs in accessing the curriculum, in accessing an alternative program and/or course, and in attending school. SEA funding is made up of two components (Formula Component and Claims-Based Component) which are allocated by the TDSB through an internal process that follows the Ministry of Education's Special Education Funding Guideline for SEA found in the [Specialized Equipment Allocation \(SEA\) 2024-25 Directives](#).

Portability/Transferring Equipment

Where appropriate, students' equipment (e.g., a SEA Chromebook) should be made available in any setting where it may be used to access learning. This could include the immediate school environment, home, or before/after school programming.

When a student who has received Specialized Equipment Allocation (SEA) equipment funded by SEA moves from the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) to a different school board, school authority, Education and Community Partnership Program (ECPP), or hospital school authority in Ontario, the equipment must accompany the student. However, if the new district school board, school authority, ECPP, or hospital school authority deems it impractical, the equipment may remain behind.

When making a decision about transferring such equipment, both parties consider factors such as a student's best interests, software compatibility and the efficiency of completing a transfer. The final decision as to whether it is practical to transfer such

equipment will be made by the new district school board, school authority, ECPP or hospital school authority. The new district school board will be responsible for any shipping or handling costs associated with the timely and effective transfer of equipment. SEA Equipment does not transfer to private schools, post-secondary institutions, employment settings, home-schooling, or out of province/country schools.

SEA - Claims-Based Component

The Claims-Based Component supports the purchase of any single item (any equipment-type technology related or not) costing \$5,000 or over before taxes for an individual student with disabilities or special education needs.

Criteria for Eligibility

Eligible students are those for whom specialized equipment is determined to be directly required and essential for attending school, accessing the Ontario curriculum, and/or supporting or augmenting a board-determined alternative program and/or course.

Students do not have to be identified as exceptional pupils through the Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC) process to be eligible for equipment funded through SEA. However, students must be receiving special education programs and services and the use of SEA-funded equipment must be indicated in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP). The student's equipment needs must be documented by an assessment or assessments from an appropriately qualified professional for claims-based components.

Examples Claims-Based Component Items:

- customized gross motor equipment
- ceiling lifts, portable person lifts and/or harnesses
- specialized communication devices such as eye gaze

SEA - Formula Component

The SEA Formula Component funds the purchase of any equipment type, technology related or not, training, maintenance, and repairs related to that equipment, for students with special education needs. This funding is used to purchase equipment assigned to individual students as well as licenses for specific programs. This funding is also utilized to support training in the use of SEA devices and with the integration of assistive technology to effectively meet the needs of students, and also to support the maintenance of devices and inventory management.

Examples of Formula Component Items:

- hardware and peripherals/accessories
- print enlargers for students with low vision
- computer hardware for Blind/Low-Vision
- adjustable desks
- Braille
- symbol or letter voice translators
- FM systems
- sensory input equipment
- positioning devices for sitting, standing and lying
- personal care items such as change tables or commodes
- assistive technology programs, apps and software
- mid-tech or high-tech Alternative and Augmentative (AAC) devices
- warranties and/or service contracts for SEA equipment
- training and professional learning for students and staff on the use of SEA-purchased equipment and assistive technology programs

Assistive Technology (AT) and SEA (SEA) Team

The AT and SEA Team supports students and staff to effectively use assistive technology and SEA equipment across the TDSB. The role of the team is to collaborate with centrally-assigned teams, administrators, teachers, support staff and students to integrate assistive technology as an effective teaching and learning tool in the classroom, and to build capacity of school-based staff to share best practices and create environments where assistive technology is used to support engagement, representation and action and expression (Universal Design for Learning principles).

Professional learning and training provided by the AT and SEA Team is done through culturally relevant and responsive programming and through the lens of identity-affirming, anti-oppressive, anti-racist, and anti-ableist accommodation strategies for students with special education needs.

The team provides district-wide opportunities for:

- school-based staff to engage in Professional Learning Communities focussing on the use, implementation and integration of assistive technology and sharing of best practices;
- school-based staff to use a co-planning and co-teaching model of support to incorporate the use of assistive technology to promote inclusion opportunities as outlined in the SIP goals of the school;
- direct instruction on the various AT tools and programs to support students in a wide variety of classroom settings;
- parents/guardians/caregivers, through a public website, conferences, printed resources, user guides and videos, to learn about using available AT tools and programs;

- school-based staff to access support during the development of Individual Education Plans (IEPs) around embedding appropriate AT tools and programs to match students' learning profiles; and
- mentorship and instruction to system leaders to embed and incorporate AT tools and programs to align with other central initiatives.

Additional information and resources for parents are available on the [TDSB AT and SEA website](#).