

Specialized Equipment & Services

56206

POLICY

California provides for specific funds to purchase specialized books, materials, and equipment as required under the individualized education program/individual family service plan (IEP/IFSP) for each pupil with low incidence disabilities who requires them for attainment of their IEP goals and objectives (EC 56836.22). In addition, funds for specialized services related to the unique needs of pupils with low incidence disabilities (including specially designed instruction and services including interpreters, note takers, readers, transcribers, and other individuals who provide specialized materials and equipment) are also available (EC 3051.16)

PROCEDURES

EC 56026.5 “Low Incidence Disability” means a severe disabling condition with an expected incidence rate of less than one percent of the total statewide enrollment in kindergarten through grade 12. For purposes of this definition, severe disabling conditions are hearing impairments, vision impairments, and severe orthopedic impairments, or any combination thereof. For purposes of this definition, vision impairments do not include disabilities within the function of vision specified in Section 56338.

One of the following disabling conditions must be the primary disability in order for a student to be eligible to receive equipment and/or services funded specifically through the low incidence funds:

Hard of Hearing (*def.* A pupil has a hearing impairment, whether permanent or fluctuating, which adversely affects a child’s educational performance)

Deaf (*def.* A pupil has a hearing impairment which is so severe that he/she is impaired in processing linguistic information through hear, with or without amplification, which adversely affects educational performance)

Severe Orthopedic Impairment (*def.* A pupil has an orthopedic impairment that is persistent and significantly restricts an individual's normal physical development, movement, and activities of daily living; and, in turn, this impairment affects the pupil's educational performance)

Deaf-Blindness (*def.* A pupil has concomitant hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes severe communication, developmental, and educational problems)

Guidelines for Requesting LI Equipment

- Low incidence equipment/supplies fund will only be used to purchase equipment and/or materials for students with low incidence disabilities.
- Low incidence funds are used to supplement not supplant other funding sources, such as general education funding or other special education funding by other sources.
- Funds are used to purchase equipment that is unique. Basic classroom equipment and materials such as computers, desks, calculators, etc. would not be considered low incidence equipment.
- Computer software will be considered on an individual basis if it is reflected in the assessment and on the IEP/IFSP, and only if it is specific to the low incidence disability. The software will be intended for individual use only; it is not to be purchased for a computer lab.

Assessment of Low Incidence Students

The assessment of a pupil, including the assessment of a pupil with a suspected low incidence disability shall be conducted by persons knowledgeable of that disability. Special attention shall be given to their unique needs, including, but not limited to, skills and the need for specialized services, materials, and equipment consistent with guidelines.

In assessing the unique educational needs, as well as the need for specialized services, materials, and equipment, some pupils counted as orthopedically impaired may not be eligible because they are not "severely orthopedically impaired" according to the definition of low incidence disabilities. Pupils who are severely orthopedically impaired require highly specialized services, equipment, and materials.

Documentation must be provided to address the following:

- How will this purchase assist the student's instruction in accordance with the IEP/IFSP?
- How often will the item be used?
- How will this purchase better facilitate integration in the classroom?
- Describe the access for learning strategies.
- How will this improve the student's access to the core curriculum?

How to Apply for Low Incidence Equipment

1. Check with the Clearinghouse for Specialized Media and Technology (CSMT) at 916.445.5103 to determine whether materials can be acquired through that agency free of charge or call the SELPA office at 916.228.2446 to verify if equipment is available through surplus.
2. Complete a low incidence request for each student. All requests for low incidence equipment and/or materials must be submitted on the "Request for Low Incidence Funds" form. Use one request form per vendor, adding additional pages as needed. Be sure to number them as page ___ of ___. Requests will not be processed without the required signature. An incomplete packet may delay the approval and ordering process. Additionally, SELPA can only purchase from vendors that accept purchase orders.
3. Attach the current IEP with the required documentation supporting the need for specialized equipment/materials.
4. Submit the "Request for Low Incidence Funds" form and all appropriate documentation to the SELPA office at least one week prior to the posted monthly Operations Council (OPS) meeting.

Approval and Ordering Process

1. Low incidence requests are forwarded to the SELPA director.
2. The SELPA director reviews all requests and presents the requests for purchases over \$1000 to Operations Council (OPS). If necessary, additional information will be requested from the district/program.

3. Operations Council will consider the request and may approve low incidence equipment purchases presented.
4. Upon Operations Council approval, the SELPA office will order the equipment from the vendor.
5. Once the equipment is received from the vendor, Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE) will inventory and label the equipment over \$500.
6. SCOE will deliver the equipment as indicated on the original “request” form.
(Note: SCOE will not deliver equipment directly to the student’s home or to a district, school, or program out of our SELPA. SCOE will deliver the equipment to the requesting district and it will be their responsibility to deliver to the student’s program.)
7. All equipment is to be used by trained staff in accordance to regulations.

Maintenance and Repair

- All repairs must come through the SELPA office. Failure to follow this process may result in costs being incurred by the district and/or program.
- A completed “Low Incidence Equipment Repair/Return” form must accompany ALL repair requests. Equipment is to be carefully packaged in the original package materials or equivalent including the “Repair” form. The “Repair” form must be completely filled out in order for the request for repair to be processed. An email or phone call to alert the Sacramento County SELPA of the repair is helpful, particularly if the repair is of an urgent need.
- The SELPA office will log in the item upon receipt. The SELPA staff will review the repair request and contact the SCOE purchasing office to obtain the necessary vendor and return details. If a repair of the item is appropriate, the item will be returned to the vendor for the specific repair. The repaired item will be sent back to the SELPA office and then returned to district requestor.
- There may be occasions when the item will not be repaired if the cost for the repair is more than the replacement cost. The SELPA office will determine this after researching the information with the vendor. The SELPA office will contact the requestor if a replacement item is recommended.

Guidelines for Home Use of Low Incidence Equipment

The IEP/IFSP team shall determine the need for home use, provide a rationale for the determination, and complete a “Home Use of Low Incidence Equipment” form.

Parents/guardians shall assume responsibility for the equipment and agree in writing to:

- Secure the equipment and supervise proper use.
- Acknowledge that the equipment may be called back at any time it is shown that is no longer needed or that it is not being properly used.
- Acknowledge that the equipment was purchased with state funds and is the property of the State of California.
- Return the equipment to the district should they move out of the district.

Equipment Tracking System

Note: SELPA office will track those items over \$500 only.

The SELPA office will provide written notification to the districts/programs annually indicating the low incidence equipment that is assigned to a student in their district/program.

The district/program needs to contact the SELPA office for any of the following situations.

1. Student moves out of this SELPA and equipment is going with the student to a new location or the equipment is staying at the site and being reassigned to a new student.
Note: If equipment is being reassigned, the IEP for the new student must indicate the need for the low incidence equipment. A copy of the IEP must be sent to the SELPA office to document reassignment of the equipment.
2. Student is going to a different school in the same SELPA and:
 - a. the equipment is going with the student to that new location
 - b. the equipment is staying and being reassigned to a new student. (If equipment is being reassigned, the IEP must indicate the need for the low incidence equipment for that new student).
 - c. The equipment is not being reassigned and is available. (District is responsible for storage of the surplus equipment.)

3. Student outgrew the equipment and:
 - a. The equipment will be reassigned to a new student. (If equipment is being reassigned, the IEP/IFSP must indicate the need for the low incidence equipment for that new student)
 - b. The equipment will not be reassigned and is available. (the District is responsible for storage of the surplus equipment.
4. The equipment is broken and cannot be repaired.
5. If a district/program receives low incidence equipment that accompanies a transfer student, the SELPA should be notified. The SELPA will document the equipment in the data base.

Additional questions regarding low incidence equipment should be directed to the SELPA office at 916-228-2446. Also refer to the “Low Incidence Questions & Answers” document.