

RUTH CULVER COMMUNITY LIBRARY  
LIBRARY POLICY

## COLLECTION MANAGEMENT

### I. Introduction and Purpose

- (A) This policy is used for the development and management of the collections of the Ruth Culver Community Library. It serves as a guide for the public about Library service as it pertains to the collections, and to inform the public about the principles upon which selection decisions are made. This policy is used by Library staff to select, maintain, and deselect materials. This policy does not replace the judgment of library professionals. The stated goals and objectives will assist them in their selection of available materials.
- (B) Because of the volume of publishing as well as the limitations of budget and space, the library must have a collection management policy with which to meet community interest and needs if it is to fulfill its objectives.
- (C) Library workers have an obligation to select, maintain, and support access to content on subjects by diverse authors and creators that meets—as closely as possible—the needs, interests, and abilities of all the people the library serves. This means acquiring materials to address popular demand and direct community input, as well as addressing collection gaps and unexpressed information needs. Library workers have a professional and ethical responsibility to be proactively inclusive in collection development and in the provision of interlibrary loan where offered. (Diverse Collections: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights)

### II. Factors Affecting Collection Management

- (A) The library serves the cultural, recreational, educational and informational needs of the public. During its history, the library has grown with the community, adding and withdrawing services and materials in response to user needs and developments of new formats.
- (B) The Ruth Culver Community Library participates in the Dane County Library Service, the South Central Library System, and the LINKcat (**L**ibrary **I**nterchange **N**etwork**K**) shared automated library catalog. Membership in these organizations benefits the Library in the following ways:
  - a. The Library's participation makes resources from throughout the state available to patrons locally. The holdings of LINK member libraries are available to Ruth Culver Community Library patrons via online catalog access and an extensive delivery system.
  - b. This shared system is accomplished by the encouragement of participating libraries to diversify their purchasing patterns. This approach to selection should result in fewer system-wide copies of marginal titles and an increase in the total number of titles available to patrons served by automated libraries.
  - c. The South Central Library System provides funds to purchase multiple copies of books currently in heavy demand. This reduces both the need for the library

- to purchase duplicate copies and the time patrons must wait for them.
- d. By belonging to SCLS, certain rules governing collection development apply to satisfy membership criteria and the cooperative nature of the system.
- (C) The following statements and policies have been adopted by the Library and are used as guidelines for the development of Library collections. The Library endorses the American Library Association's "Library Bill of Rights", "Freedom to Read" and "Freedom to View" statements presented in the addenda of this document.

### **III. Responsibilities for Collection Management**

- (A) The ultimate responsibility for collection development, as with all library activities, rests with the Library Director, who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Library Board of Trustees. The Library Director delegates selection for specific areas to other qualified members of the staff.
- (B) All staff members, as well as the public, are encouraged to suggest materials to be considered for purchase. All recommendations are considered in line with selection policies.
- (C) Because the Library Director must be able to answer to the Library Board and the general public for actual selections made by staff, they have the authority to reject or select any item contrary to the recommendations of the staff.

### **IV. Selection of Library Material: Criteria for Evaluation**

General criteria: The selection of library materials involves the following factors and considerations. An item need not meet all of the general criteria in order to be acceptable.

- Public demand, interest or need
- Special interest to the Sauk Prairie community
- Relation to collections unique to the Ruth Culver Community Library
- Reviews
- Physical limitations of the Library building
- Budgetary considerations
- Contemporary significance, popular interest or permanent value
- Suitability of physical form for Library use
- Suitability of subject and style for the intended audience
- Present and potential relevance to community needs
- Relation to the existing collection and to other material on the subject
- Prominence, authority, skill and/or competence of author, illustrator, creator or publisher
- Timeliness of material
- Authenticity of historical, regional or social setting
- Attention of critics, reviewers and the public
- Literary or artistic merit
- Enduring value
- Social significance

- Availability of materials on the subject
  - Awards
- (A) Criteria for judging materials:
1. Materials are judged on the basis of the work as a whole, not on a part taken out of context.
  2. Reviews from professional journals such as *Library Journal*, popular reviewing sources such as *The New York Times Book Review*, online sources, or other authorities are used.
  3. The lack of a review or an unfavorable review is not sufficient reason to reject a title for which there is demand.
- (B) Criteria for selection:
1. Qualification/reputation of the author, creator and/or publisher
  2. Scope and authority of the subject matter
  3. Appeal to the general-interest reader
  4. Suitability of the subject and style for the intended audience
  5. Date of publication/timeliness of the material
  6. Suitability of physical format for library use
  7. Current and anticipated needs of the public
  8. Literary merit
- (C) Other guidelines and considerations for selecting materials
1. **Audiovisual Materials:** Audiovisual materials such as movies and audiobooks are an important supplement to the print collection. As with print materials, audiovisual materials are selected based on demand, critical review, and the needs and interests of the public.
  2. **Periodical collection:** A collection of magazines and newspapers is maintained as a supplement to the book collection. Selection will be made according to the criteria set forth in this section.
  3. **Reference collection:** Library staff may choose to catalog some items to remain in the building at all times. The decision to do so is based on heavy use, cost, and frequency of referral by library staff.
  4. **New Formats:** New formats shall be considered for the collection when national surveys and local requests indicate a significant portion of the Prairie du Sac community has the interest and necessary technology to make use of the format. Selection will be made according to the criteria set forth in this section.
  5. **Gift materials:** Materials donated to the library are not automatically added to the collection. These items are reviewed according to the selection criteria set forth in this section. For more information about donating materials to the library, please see the Gift Acceptance Policy.

## **V. Maintenance of Library Materials**

Once materials have been added to the Library's collection, they are managed through an assessment and evaluation process to ensure that ongoing collection priorities are met; that collections remain up to date, balanced, and attractive; and that space limitations are minimized. This process identifies items for replacement, retention or de-selection. Library staff utilize

professional judgment and expertise in deciding which materials to retain, replace, repair or de-select.

- (A) Library materials are processed in such a way as to insure their maximum use under normal circumstances.
- (B) All materials returned to the library are inspected for damage.
- (C) Damaged but still usable materials are mended according to an established set of procedures.
- (D) Patrons are charged a replacement cost for materials they check out that are irretrievably lost or damaged beyond repair.

## **VI. Collection Evaluation**

Weeding (removing items from the collection) is an integral part of collection development. De-selected materials will, at the Library's discretion, be donated to the Friends of the Public Library for book sales, or disposed of through other means determined by the Library. No materials are held for individuals. The Library retains those materials that continue to have enduring or permanent significance to its mission and overall collection goals.

Along with the same criteria used to select new materials, general criteria for retaining, replacing, repairing or de-selecting include:

- (A) Availability of item in alternative formats
- (B) Feasibility, cost of repair
- (C) Historical significance, interest, or value
- (D) Physical condition
- (E) Relative usefulness of item
- (F) Space considerations
- (G) Superseded, inaccurate, or out-of-date content
- (H) Usage

## **VII. Reconsideration of Library Materials**

(A) Requests to remove materials will be considered within the context of the policies set forth in this document. The Library will take on the process of reconsideration one item at a time per patron. The Library will reconsider any material in its collection upon written request of a patron who is a local resident and is served by Sauk Prairie community libraries:

1. Patrons requesting that an item be reviewed should fill out a Request for Reconsideration Form, which is available at the library. While the item is being

reviewed, it will remain in circulation until a definitive decision is made. The inquiry will be reviewed by the Library Director within one month and a letter will be sent to the patron explaining the decision once it has been made. The patron may appeal the Library Director's decision by writing a letter to the Library Board. If the patron chooses to appeal, the inquiry will be placed on the agenda of the next regular meeting of the Ruth Culver Community Library Board of Trustees. Their decision will be final.

- (B) The Library recognizes that some materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons. Selection of materials will not be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval but solely on the basis of the principles set forth in this policy
- (C) Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of their contents, and no library materials will be sequestered, except to protect from damage or theft.
- (D) Responsibility for reading and the use of the library by children rests with their parents or legal guardians. At no time will the library staff act *in loco parentis*. Selection of library materials will not be inhibited by the possibility that they may come into the possession of children.

### **VIII. Intellectual Freedom**

The Library is committed to the principle that the constitutionally protected freedoms of speech and press are enjoyed by all. To this end, the Library strives to offer a collection that represents the needs of our diverse community. Inclusion of an item in the collection does not mean that the Library endorses any theory or statement contained in those materials and resources.

While every patron may not agree with the viewpoints offered in some Library material, the Library has a responsibility to provide a balanced collection with access to material reflecting diverse ideas through which any side of a question, cause, or movement may be explored, provided that the material meets the outlined selection criteria. The balanced nature of the collection is reflected in the diversity of materials, not in an equality of numbers. Patrons are free to choose what they like from the collection, to reject what they don't like, but not to restrict the freedom of others to choose.

The Library's collection may include proselytizing works representing political, economic, moral, and religious or other vested positions when those works meet the selection criteria. Materials are not excluded because of the origin, background or views of those contributing to their creation or because they represent a particular aspect of life, frankness of expression or controversial subject matter.

The Library does not use labels on any material in such a way as to show approval or disapproval of the content of that material. Materials are not sequestered to show approval, disapproval or judgment as to suitability of content for a particular audience. The Library does not remove or obliterate ratings attached to material by a publisher, industry group or distributor. Removing or altering such rating, if they are placed there by or with permission of the copyright holder, denies access to the complete work and the entire spectrum of ideas that the material intended to express.

Decisions about what materials are suitable for particular children should be made by the people who know them best - their parents or guardians. Selection of materials for adults is not constrained by possible exposure to children or teenagers.

The Library is committed to free and open access to its collections and to connecting people with the world of ideas, information and materials they wish to explore in a friendly, nonjudgmental manner.

## **IX. Addenda**

- (A) Library Bill of Rights (<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>)
- (B) Freedom to Read Statement  
(<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/statementspols/freedomreadstatement>)
- (C) Freedom to View Statement  
(<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/statementspols/freedomviewstatement>)
- (D) Diverse Collections: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights  
(<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/diversecollections>)
- (E) Request for Reconsideration Form

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