

III. COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

LIBRARY MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Mt. Zion District Library is to provide the people of its community with access to a balanced collection of books and other materials, services and programming which will serve their educational, cultural and recreational needs.

PURPOSE

This selection policy defines the standards and outlines the responsibility for materials selection for the Mt. Zion District Library (*referred to as Library*). Operating within the framework of policies and objectives determined by the Board of Trustees, the primary responsibility for selection of materials rests with the library director and selected library staff. The library will at all times attempt to select materials that represent a wide range of viewpoints and will do its best to exercise impartiality in all selection activities. This collection development policy is designed to build strong, useable and well-balanced collections, which are geared to the objectives of the library, and reflect the interests and needs of the community. The collection includes materials for all ages and aspects of the community, from infants through senior citizens, and collects materials in all areas of the current formats. An effort is made to include information representing all sides of controversial issues as such material becomes available. The criteria for selection of controversial materials are the same as for any other materials. Responsibility for the reading choices of children rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection for the adult collection will not be inhibited by the possibility that materials may inadvertently fall into the hands of children. An open shelf policy will be followed at all times.

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

The collection of the Mt. Zion District Library is constantly growing and changing. Every possible effort is made by staff to maintain a collection that serves the educational and recreational needs and wants of the library district residents.

The collection is made up of mostly print fiction and non-fiction titles for children, young adults and adults. Emphasis is placed on popular titles as well as titles that encourage reading for all ages, e.g. Board Books and "I Can Read" books for the very young and juvenile series for both boys and girls.

Because of increased demand, our Large Print collection is growing rapidly.

Our collections of Audio books on CD, music CDs, and DVDs are growing as demand for these increases. We also are part of a 30+ library and growing consortium that makes available downloadable audio books, eBooks, music and movies. This collection is growing rapidly as eBooks become more and more requested. The library also makes eBooks available through the SHARE card catalog.

Most of the reference collection has been incorporated into the circulating collection with the exception of a few titles, e.g., Local History materials.

COOPERATIVE COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

Participation in the Illinois Heartland Library System, OCLC, First Search and other interstate and intrastate shared collections is an integral part of resource sharing and development of the Mt. Zion District Library materials.

GUIDELINES FOR THE SELECTION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

The selection of library materials to be added to the collection is based on several important factors, including:

- **DEMAND:** The library includes demand among its criteria when considering acquisition. This demand may be voiced by the library's users, or it may be based from a special emphasis on subject areas and materials needed.
- **VALUE:** Of equal importance in serving users are various quality criteria: relevance, authority, reliability, literary excellence and other inherent qualities in the materials considered for acquisition.
- **FORMAT:** The library shall collect and preserve material in any form, as best meets the needs of users, and as will be governed by the availability of space and finances. The same philosophy and standards of book selection applies to all materials.
- **REVIEWS:** Reviews in professional or literary journals and general periodicals shall be used as an aid to the selection or decision process and shall be sought wherever possible. The lack of a review or unfavorable review shall not be the sole reason for not selecting a title that is in demand.

Consideration is also given to the following factors:

- Currency and timeliness of the topic
- Uniqueness of the topic
- Depth of coverage of existing collection
- Budget allocations
- Shelf space

Consideration will be given to the work as a whole. No work shall be excluded because of specific passages or pieces taken out of context.

Duplicate copies of popular titles may be purchased as local demand and/or the cooperative of the IHLS LLSAP apply.

DEVELOPMENT OF SPECIFIC AREAS

Materials for Children and Youth

The Library subscribes to the following policy: "Free Access to Libraries for Minors," an Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights (as adopted by the ALA Council, 1981) giving children and young people access to all parts of the Library; however, collections are available that specifically serve children, middle schoolers and young adults. Parents and/or caregivers are encouraged to assist young people in choosing library materials. Materials appropriate for the interests and needs of all ages served are chosen for these collections and include fiction, non-fiction and non-book materials.

Local History and Genealogy

Local history is collected on a regional basis, including the two counties served by the library district. Genealogy materials are purchased on a limited basis, but donations of materials are accepted if space is available, the materials are not a duplicate copy, and the librarian deems them useful. There is an excellent historical and genealogical library in Decatur that may be used by all county residents.

Interlibrary Loan

Because of limited budget and space, the library cannot provide all materials that are requested. Therefore, Interlibrary Loan is used to obtain materials from other libraries that are beyond the scope of this library's collection.

The library belongs to an automated catalog and circulation consortium through the Illinois Heartland Library System (IHLS), which is the primary source for Interlibrary Loan materials. The library is also an authorized OCLC (Online Computer Library Center) participant and can obtain materials from libraries throughout the state and beyond.

Reciprocal Borrowing

The library's participation in the IHLS allows its patrons full use of any other IHLS public library, and most other public libraries in the state.

COLLECTION MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

The collections are assessed on an ongoing basis according to standard assessment guidelines. To ensure a vital collection of continued value to the community, books that have outlived their usefulness or are in poor condition are withdrawn in a process called weeding. Weeding is an important tool used to keep the collection current and appealing to users. It is the responsibility of the librarian and trained assistants to weed the collection according to generally accepted library development procedures. Materials in useable condition, including gift books not included in the circulating collection, may be donated to the Friends of the Library to be sold in their book sales.

DONATIONS

Donations of materials 10 years old or newer are accepted with the understanding that any material not selected for the library's collection, will be placed in the Friends of the Library's book sale, or otherwise disposed of. The library will use donation receipts upon request, but will not place any dollar value on the items received. Monetary donations, trusts and bequests are gratefully accepted. A separate policy concerning gifts and donations is available upon request.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT MATERIALS

Although materials are carefully selected, differences of opinion regarding suitable materials for the library can arise. The Library subscribes to the provisions of the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement as adopted by the American Library Association. These documents are considered a part of this policy. All individuals have the right to choose which library materials they will use. However, no one has the right to restrict the freedom of others to read whatever they wish. No book or other material in question is automatically removed from the collection because of an objection to it.

Strong objection to any library materials must be made in writing according to “Procedures for Handling Complaints about Library materials” provided at the end of this section. Patrons requesting that materials be withdrawn from or restricted within the collection may complete a “Request for Reconsideration” of library materials from a staff member. Examination and reconsideration of materials, if necessary, will be handled as outlined in the procedures. A copy of these procedures as well as forms for registering complaints may be obtained from the library service desk.

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING COMPLAINTS ABOUT LIBRARY MATERIALS

1. If patrons wish to file a complaint about library materials, Form I, Complaint About Library Materials, should be completed by the patron. This form stays on file with the Library Director. The Director will examine the material, as well as critical reviews of the material. Repeated complaints about specific works or materials in general may generate a reconsideration of a specific work and/or selection policies.
2. If patrons wish to have materials reconsidered (as opposed to filing a complaint without definite action), they may fill out Form II, Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials.
3. When Form II is completely filled out and returned to the library, the Library Director will review the complaint and the material and determine appropriate action.
4. The Library Director will write a letter to the patron who initiated the complaint, outlining the above procedures and inviting the patron to the library to discuss the matter.
5. After an interview with the Library Director, a patron desiring further action can make a request in writing for a hearing before the Board of Library Trustees, who has final authority.
6. The library’s Board of Trustees will perform a committee review of the material in question and decide appropriate action, which will be the final decision.

Form I

COMPLAINT ABOUT LIBRARY MATERIAL

Material: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Complaint Represents: _____ Individual _____ Organization

Reason for Complaint: _____

Signature: _____

Took Form II: _____ Yes _____ No

Date Form II Returned: _____

Form II

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

Author: _____

Title: _____

Publisher or Distributor: _____

Request Initiated by: _____

Address: _____ Telephone: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Request represents: _____ Individual

_____ Organization, list name _____

_____ Other, list name _____

1. Have you read or viewed the entire work? _____
If not, what parts? _____

2. To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific; cite pages or sections)

3. What good or valuable features do you find in the material? _____

4. What do you believe is the theme of this work? _____

What do you feel might be the result of reading or viewing this material? _____

Have you read any reviews of this material? _____

If so, please specify: _____

Do you think the material would be more appropriate for a different age group?

Please explain: _____

What would you like the library to do about this material? _____

Can you recommend other material that would convey as valuable a picture and/or perspective of the subject treated? _____ If yes, please specify: _____

Date: _____ Signature: _____

THE LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services:

- 1. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.**
- 2. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be prescribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.**
- 3. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.**
- 4. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgement of free expression and free access to ideas.**
- 5. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or view.**
- 6. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.**

[Adopted June 18, 1948. Amended Feb. 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; and Jan. 23, 1980, by the ALA Council, American Library Association.]

FREEDOM TO READ STATEMENT

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove books from sale, to censor textbooks, to label "controversial" books, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently arise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is not valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We as citizens devoted to the use of books, and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating them wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free men will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1) It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those which are unorthodox or unpopular with the majority.

2) Publishers, librarians and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation contained in the books they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what books should be published or circulated.

3) It is contrary to the public interest of publishers and librarians to determine the acceptability of a book on the basis of the personal history or political affiliation of the author.

4) There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter

deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.

5) It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept with any book the prejudgment of a label characterizing the book or author as subversive or dangerous.

6) It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards to tastes upon the community at large.

7) It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility bookmen can demonstrate that the answer to a bad idea is a good one.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of books. We do so because we believe that they are good, possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important, that ideas can be dangerous, but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

[Adopted by American Library Association, May 1953]

FREEDOM TO VIEW STATEMENT

The freedom to view, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore, we affirm these principles:

- 1) It is in the public interest to provide the broadest possible access to films and other audiovisual materials because they have proven to be among the most effective means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.**
- 2) It is no the public interest to provide for our audiences, films and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.**
- 3) It is our professional responsibility to resist the constraint of labeling or pre-judging a film on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker, or on the basis of controversial content.**
- 4) It is our professional responsibility to contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.**

[Originally endorsed by the American Library Association on June 28, 1979]

CHALLENGED MATERIALS: AN INTERPRETATION OF THE LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

The American Library Association declares as a matter of firm principle that it is the responsibility of every library to have a clearly defined materials selection policy in written form which reflects the Library Bill of Rights and which is approved by the appropriate governing authority.

Challenged materials which meet the criteria for selection in the materials selection policy of the library should not be removed under any legal or extra-legal pressure. The Library Bill of Rights states in Article I that: "Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation," and in Article II, that "Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval." Freedom of expression is protected by the Constitution of the United States, but constitutionally protected expression is often separated from protected expression only by a dim and uncertain line. The Constitution requires a procedure designed to focus searchingly on challenged expression before it can be suppressed. An adversary hearing is a part of the procedure.

Therefore, any attempt, be it legal or extra-legal, to regulate or suppress materials in libraries must be closely scrutinized to the end that protected expression is not abridged.

[Adopted June 25, 1971; amended July 1, 1981; amended Jan. 10, 1990, by the ALA Council.]

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