

Collection Development

Collection Development Policy

I. Introduction

It is the policy of the Wright Memorial Public Library Board of Trustees to recognize the diverse library needs of all citizens, regardless of age, race, national origin, religious, social, or political views.

The purpose of this Collection Development Policy is to guide staff in effectively using the library's financial resources to meet the needs of the community by:

- 1) Broadly defining the purposes and scope of the collection.
- 2) Designating the authority and responsibility for collection development.
- 3) Describing the selection criteria to be used.
- 4) Stating the policies on accepting gifts, withdrawal of materials, replacing lost and damaged items, and patron objections to materials in the collection.
- 5) Affirming support for the intellectual freedom statements of the American Library Association.

II. Purpose of the Library's Collection

The purpose of the collection of Wright Memorial Public Library is to fulfill the mission, vision, and goals accepted by the Board of Trustees:

Mission

The Wright Memorial Public Library is a community focal point that helps fulfill patron needs for information and entertainment materials; meets the learning needs of patrons on topics related to work, school, and personal life; and encourages learning and intellectual growth from the earliest ages. The library provides high levels of efficient, friendly, personal service; and fosters an atmosphere of intellectual liberty in the American tradition of free ideas.

Vision

Wright Memorial Public Library has a distinctive role in the community as an institution that fuels the intellect and imagination of people of all ages. Wright Memorial Public Library recognizes that libraries are no longer just physical places containing inventories of books, but have become channels through which knowledge flows to patrons from many sources. The Library strives to serve all patrons, whether on-site or virtual, by providing the resources they seek promptly, completely, accurately, and in a comfortable environment. The Library partners with other organizations to project its reach in the community and strives to expand physical and virtual access to its resources. Wright Memorial Public Library seeks to play an active role in preparing preschoolers to learn, helping students succeed in school, and supporting lifelong learners by providing a broad range of viewpoints, formats, and programs. Wright Memorial Public Library actively works to connect patrons with resources that will enrich their lives.

Goals

- 1) **Stimulate Imagination:** Reading, viewing and listening for pleasure.
Library patrons will have materials and programs that excite their imaginations and provide pleasurable reading, viewing and listening experiences.
- 2) **Help Students Succeed in School:** Homework help.
Students will have the resources they need to succeed in school.
- 3) **Create Young Readers:** Early literacy.
Children from birth to age five will have programs and services designed to ensure that they will enter school ready to learn to read, write, and listen.
- 4) **Satisfy Curiosity:** Lifelong learning and life choices.
Patrons will have the resources they need to explore topics of personal interest and continue to learn throughout their lives. Patrons will have the resources they need to identify and analyze risks, benefits, and alternatives before making decisions that affect their lives.
- 5) **Provide a Comfortable Place to Visit:** Physical and virtual spaces.
Patrons will have a safe and welcoming physical place to meet and interact with others or to sit quietly and read and will have open and accessible virtual spaces that support networking.
- 6) **Connect Patrons to the Online World:** Public Internet access.
Patrons will have high-speed access to the digital world with no unnecessary restrictions or fees to ensure that everyone can take advantage of the ever-growing resources and services available through the Internet.

III. Scope

The collection is intended to meet most needs of a suburban population, preschool age through senior adults. It is not intended to provide complete coverage of any given subject area, but rather a balanced selection of materials currently available. The collection is not archival and is reviewed and revised continuously to meet current needs.

Wright Memorial Public Library intends to offer choices of format, treatment, and level of difficulty so that most individuals' needs can be met without needlessly duplicating the resources available in other area libraries.

Both circulating and reference materials will usually be collected at the Basic Information Level for all subject areas, as defined by the American Library Association's *Guide for Written Collection Policy Statements*. Collecting at this level means that the library will usually purchase materials that serve "to introduce and define a subject and to indicate the varieties of information available elsewhere." Emphasis is on works of general interest for the non-specialized user. The library uses interlibrary loan services to offer more specialized materials for patrons who request them.

An exception to the "basic level" of collecting is Oakwood local history materials, which are acquired as comprehensively as possible.

IV. Authority and Responsibility for Collection Development

Collection Development is and shall be vested in the Library Director by the Board of Trustees. Under the Library Director's direction, collection development may be delegated to members of the professional staff who are qualified for these duties by reason of education, training, and experience. Any material so selected for the collection shall be considered to have been selected by the Board of Trustees.

V. Selection Criteria

The selection of any material for the library does not constitute an endorsement of its content.

These are selection criteria to be used by collection development staff:

For all materials:

- 1) Reviews in library journals and other publications (though lack of a review or lack of a favorable review shall not be the sole criteria for rejection of a title for which there is popular demand)
- 2) Information from publishers' catalogs and promotions
- 3) Examination copies
- 4) Patron recommendations
- 5) Popular demand
- 6) Availability and cost
- 7) Interest and appeal to Wright Memorial Public Library patrons
- 8) Professional judgment based on education, training, and experience

Additional criteria for nonfiction:

- 1) Qualification or reputation of the author in the subject field
- 2) Scope of the subject matter
- 3) Quality of the writing
- 4) Needs of the community
- 5) Timeliness of the information
- 6) Reputation of the publisher
- 7) Organization of content (such as inclusion of indices and bibliographies)
- 8) Relationship to the existing collection
- 9) Weakness of the collection in a particular area
- 10) Physical qualities (binding, print size, illustrations)

Additional criteria for audiovisual items:

- 1) Reputation of an author, publisher, producer, director, artist, and/or performer
- 2) Quality of production and sound

VI. Gifts and Donations

Wright Memorial Public Library welcomes and encourages monetary gifts to supplement the materials budget. All acquisitions made with donated funds are made in accordance with this collection development policy. The library may not be able to fulfill requests regarding subject matter or specific titles. Due to space and use constraints, we cannot guarantee that any gift will remain permanently part of the collection.

The library also accepts donations of books and other library media. These are evaluated using the same criteria as is used for selection of all library materials.

The library retains unconditional ownership of gifts and decides if items will be added to the collection, offered in a book sale, or discarded. The library reserves the right to refuse donations.

The library does not provide monetary appraisal of any gift for income tax or other purposes, but may provide a receipt for the number of items donated.

VII. Withdrawal of Materials

The library's objective is to maintain a collection of materials that are in demand by our patrons. Materials not in demand will be weeded and discarded. Weeding will be done continuously. Discarded materials may be made available in the library's book sale.

These are factors collection development staff will consider as favorable to weeding and discarding:

1. Poor physical condition
2. Content no longer considered accurate or factual and material not needed to represent a historical viewpoint
3. Little or no recent use
4. Excessive number of copies
5. Superseded editions
6. Availability of newer, better, more up-to-date editions or releases

VIII. Replacement of Lost or Damaged Items

Materials missing, lost, destroyed, long overdue, or damaged will not automatically be replaced. The library only buys replacement copies of materials if usage warrants. Factors to be considered by staff in deciding on replacement include:

- 1) Is there a comparable, more recent title on the same subject?
- 2) Is there already adequate coverage in the subject area without replacing the title?
- 3) Is there demand for that specific title?
- 4) Is the title an essential work in the literature of the subject field or of a particular author?

IX. Patron Objections to Materials in the Collection

Library patrons may address questions and concerns about materials selected, or about the collection policy, to the Director. Such patrons will be provided with a copy of this policy and a "Request for Reconsideration of Library Material" form. A patron who is not satisfied with the Director's response may choose to make arrangements to address the Board of Trustees at one of its regular meetings.

X. Intellectual Freedom

The library recognizes that some materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some users. Selection decisions are not made on the basis of any anticipated approval or disapproval, but on the merits of the work in relation to the overall development of the collection and the necessity of meeting the needs of many individuals with a broad range of interests and viewpoints. No material shall be excluded because of race, nationality, political, religious or social views of the originator.

Responsibility for children's use of the library rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection is not influenced by the possibility that materials may be accessible to children. Library materials are not



marked to show approval or disapproval of their contents, nor are they sequestered except for the purpose of protecting them from damage or theft.

The Library Board vigorously supports the American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights and its interpretive documents. (See following sections)

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 proscribed 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 abridgment 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 views.
- 6) Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 18, 1948, by the ALA Council; amended February 2, 1961; amended June 28, 1967; amended January 23, 1980; inclusion of “age” reaffirmed January 24, 1996.

The Library Board vigorously supports intellectual freedom as articulated in the following position papers adopted by the American Library Association Council.

The Freedom to View

The Freedom to View, along with 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 ensure the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.



- 2) It is in 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 prejudging 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.

This statement was originally drafted by the Education Film Library Association's Freedom to View Committee, and adopted by the EFLA Board of Directors in February, 1979. Endorsed by the ALA January 10, 1990. Educational Film Library Association, 43 W. 61 Street, New York, NY

Free Access to Libraries for Minors

Library policies and procedures that effectively deny minors equal and equitable access to all library resources and services available to other users violate the Library Bill of Rights. The American Library Association opposes all attempts to restrict access to library services, materials, and facilities based on the age of library users.

Article V of the Library Bill of Rights states, "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views." The "right to use a library" includes free access to, and unrestricted use of, all the services, materials, and facilities the library has to offer. Every restriction on access to, and use of, library resources, based solely on the chronological age, educational level, literacy skills, or legal emancipation of users violates Article V.

Libraries are charged with the mission of providing services and developing resources to meet the diverse information needs and interests of the communities they serve. Services, materials, and facilities that fulfill the needs and interests of library users at different stages in their personal development are a necessary part of library resources. The needs and interests of each library user, and resources appropriate to meet those needs and interests, must be determined on an individual basis. Librarians cannot predict what resources will best fulfill the needs and interests of any individual user based on a single criterion such as chronological age, educational level, literacy skills, or legal emancipation. Equitable access to all library resources and services shall not be abridged through restrictive scheduling or use policies.

Libraries should not limit the selection and development of library resources simply because minors will have access to them. Institutional self-censorship diminishes the credibility of the library in the community, and restricts access for all library users.

Children and young adults unquestionably possess First Amendment rights, including the right to receive information through the library in print, non-print, or digital format. Constitutionally protected speech cannot be suppressed solely to protect children or young adults from ideas or images a legislative body believes to be unsuitable for them.¹

Librarians and library governing bodies should not resort to age restrictions in an effort to avoid actual or anticipated objections, because only a court of law can determine whether material is not constitutionally protected.

The mission, goals, and objectives of libraries cannot authorize librarians or library governing bodies to assume, abrogate, or overrule the rights and responsibilities of parents and guardians. As *Libraries: an American Value* states, “We affirm the responsibility and the right of all parents and guardians to guide their own children’s use of the library and its resources and services.” Librarians and library governing bodies cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child. Librarians and governing bodies should maintain that only parents and guardians have the right and the responsibility to determine their children’s—and only their children’s—access to library resources. Parents and guardians who do not want their children to have access to specific library services, materials, or facilities should so advise their children.²

Lack of access to information can be harmful to minors. Librarians and library governing bodies have a public and professional obligation to ensure that all members of the community they serve have free, equal, and equitable access to the entire range of library resources regardless of content, approach, format, or amount of detail. This principle of library service applies equally to all users, minors as well as adults. Librarians and library governing bodies must uphold this principle in order to provide adequate and effective service to minors.

¹ See *Erznoznik v. City of Jacksonville*, 422 U.S. 205 (1975) “Speech that is neither obscene as to youths nor subject to some other legitimate proscription cannot be suppressed solely to protect the young from ideas or images that a legislative body thinks unsuitable for them. In most circumstances, the values protected by the First Amendment are no less applicable when government seeks to control the flow of information to minors.” See also *Tinker v. Des Moines School Dist.*, 393 U.S.503 (1969); *West Virginia Bd. of Ed. v. Barnette*, 319 U.S. 624 (1943); *AAMA v. Kendrick*, . 244 F.3d 572 (7th Cir. 2001).

Adopted June 30, 1972, by the ALA Council; amended July 1, 1981; July 3, 1991; June 30, 2004; July 2, 2008.

² Ohio law (*Ohio Revised Code* 149.432) allows a minor child’s parent, guardian, or legal custodian to have access to library records or patron information pertaining to that minor child. Library Board policy allows a minor child’s parent, guardian, or legal custodian to choose not to allow that child the ability to use his/her library card to borrow audiovisual materials.

Libraries: An American Value

Libraries in America are cornerstones of the communities they serve. Free access to the books, ideas, resources, and information in America’s libraries is imperative for education, employment, enjoyment, and self-government.

Libraries are a legacy to each generation, offering the heritage of the past and the promise of the future. To ensure that libraries flourish and have the freedom to promote and protect the public good in the 21st century, we believe certain principles must be guaranteed.



To that end, we affirm this contract with the people we serve:

- 1) We defend the constitutional rights of all individuals, including children and teenagers, to use the library's resources and services;
- 2) We value our nation's diversity and strive to reflect that diversity by providing a full spectrum of resources and services to the communities we serve;
- 3) We affirm the responsibility and the right of all parents and guardians to guide their own children's use of the library and its resources and services;
- 4) We connect people and ideas by helping each person select from and effectively use the library's resources;
- 5) We protect each individual's privacy and confidentiality in the use of library resources and services;
- 6) We protect the rights of individuals to express their opinions about library resources and services;
- 7) We celebrate and preserve our democratic society by making available the widest possible range of viewpoints, opinions and ideas, so that all individuals have the opportunity to become lifelong learners - informed, literate, educated, and culturally enriched.

Change is constant, but these principles transcend change and endure in a dynamic technological, social, and political environment.

By embracing these principles, libraries in the United States can contribute to a future that values and protects freedom of speech in a world that celebrates both our similarities and our differences, respects individuals and their beliefs, and holds all persons truly equal and free.

Adopted February 3, 1999, by the Council of the American Library Association

