

2.14 Materials Selection/Collection Development

Introduction

The Sayreville Public Library endeavors to provide all individuals in the community with carefully selected materials to aid the individual in the pursuit of education, information, research, pleasure, and the creative use of leisure time.

The collection development policy is used by the library staff in the selection and retention of materials and also serves to acquaint the general public with the principles of selection. Collection development is the ongoing process of assessing the materials available for purchase or licensing and making the decision, first, on their inclusion, and second, on their retention.

The American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read Statement, and the Freedom to View have been endorsed by the Sayreville Public Library Board of Trustees and are integral parts of this policy.

Scope of Collection

The primary goal of collection development is to provide the best possible collection with the financial resources available. The decision to select any item for the collection is based on demand, anticipated need, and the effort to maintain a wide and balanced collection, representing all sides of an issue.

The inclusion of an item in the library collection in no way represents an endorsement of its contents. Only individuals can determine what is most appropriate for their needs and can define what material or information is consistent with their personal or family values. Parents and legal guardians have the sole and exclusive responsibility for their children's use of library materials and shall be held responsible for any damage(s) caused by their children's use of such materials. The Library has no responsibility whatsoever to monitor and/or supervise children's use of any Library materials.

In the development of its collection, the Sayreville Public Library recognizes that it is impossible for a library of our size to meet all the needs of our community. As a member of an automated resource sharing network, other reciprocal agreements, and a state supported inter-library loan system, the library supplements its resources with materials borrowed from other libraries through these larger entities.

Professional and special materials, such as legal, medical, and religious works, are purchased only if they are of general interest.

The Library does not support educational curriculums through the purchase of textbooks. Textbooks may be added to the collection if they provide the best or only source of information on a subject, or to complement an existing area with another perspective.

Selection Criteria

Library materials are selected on the basis of informational, educational, cultural, and recreational value. These materials are selected in compliance with the mission and goals of the library. The following general criteria are also used in selecting materials for addition to the collection:

- 1) Importance and value to the collection and library users
- 2) Significance of the subject matter
- 3) Current appeal and popular demand
- 4) Local interest
- 5) Cost and budgetary constraints
- 6) Authority, accuracy, and artistic quality

Reviews from professional and popular media are a major source of information about new materials. Standard bibliographies, indexes, book and media lists by recognized authorities, including best seller lists, and the advice of competent people in specific subject areas also may be used.

Both public and commercial, free and paid online resources are selected using the criteria outlined in this policy are an integral part of the collection. Special considerations for electronic information sources are:

- 1) Ease of use of the product
- 2) Availability of the information to multiple, concurrent users
- 3) Technical requirements to provide access to the information
- 4) Technical support and training

Gifts and Donations

The library accepts gifts, donations, and will purchase memorials. The library does not guarantee that donated materials will be added to Library collections and the determination of what materials will be added to the Library collection is left to the sole and exclusive discretion of the Library. The Library reserves the right to give donations to the Friends book sale, including donations consisting of materials which were gifted and/or donated to the Library. The library reserves the right to evaluate all gifts, donations, and memorial requests in accordance with the criteria applied to purchased materials. Those which do not meet the library's objectives and policies may be refused. Bookplates may be, but are not required to be, provided for memorials and gifts. The library does not provide an appraisal of donated items, but may, upon request of the donor, provide a

written receipt for gifts, indicating the number and general description of materials. No conditions may be imposed upon any gift, donation, or memorial either before or after acceptance by the library. All gifts and donations shall be subject to any and all applicable provisions of law.

Withdrawal of Materials

The collection is reviewed and revised on an ongoing basis to meet contemporary needs. Collections are current and popular, not archival, nor are materials needlessly duplicated. Materials that are worn, damaged, outdated, duplicated, no longer accurate, and no longer used may be removed from the collection. The professional staff of the library, under the general direction and supervision of the Library Director, will be solely responsible for the withdrawal of materials.

Responsibility for Selection

Final authority for the determination of policy in the acquisition of books and other materials is vested in the Library Board of Trustees. Responsibility for material selection within this policy and control of expenditure for materials rests with the Director. Selection decisions may be delegated to qualified staff members by the Director.

Reconsideration of Materials

Although materials are carefully selected, there can be differences of opinion regarding suitable materials. Whenever a patron objects to the presence or absence of any library material, the objection will be referred to the staff member(s) responsible for purchasing that material. The staff member or the Director will discuss the matter with the complainant. Requests for reconsideration may be made only by patrons completing a "Request For Reconsideration of Library Material" form which is available from the library. The completed form will be given to the Library Director for a written response. A decision will be made regarding the material within a reasonable amount of time, with written reasons for the decision conveyed to the patron. Appeals from the Library Director's decision may be directed only to the Board of Trustees for their final decision.

The Library shall have no liability whatsoever for any claims and/or allegations regarding the selection, donation, withdrawal and/or reconsideration of any materials and/or any refusal to accept any gift, donation and/or memorial request.