

Kittanning Public Library Collection Development Policy

Introduction

A collection development policy is a written document which defines the scope and nature of a library's existing collection, and the policies and plans for continuing development of resources as they relate to institutional goals, general selection criteria and intellectual freedom. "Library collection" includes all items acquired for use by the public. Standards of selection are applicable to print, non-print and electronic media.

The objectives of the Kittanning Public Library as factors in selection are as follows:

- To help people know more about themselves and their world
- To supplement formal study and encourage informal self-education
- To meet the information needs of the community
- To stimulate thoughtful participation in the affairs of the community, the country and the world
- To support educational, civic, cultural and recreational activities within the community
- To aid in learning and improving job-related skills
- To assist the individual to grow intellectually and spiritually and to enjoy life more fully.

Responsibilities for Material Selection

The ultimate responsibility for selection of print and non print materials as with all library activities rests with the Library Director who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Kittanning Public Library Board of Trustees. This responsibility is shared by other members of the professional staff; however, because the Director must be able to answer to the Library Board and the general public for actual selection made by the staff, s/he has the authority to reject or select any items contrary to the recommendations of the staff.

Principles

The selection of all library materials should be as objective as possible. Selection that is affected by one's own prejudice is an act of censorship. A thorough knowledge of the library's collection and overall balance is necessary to good materials selection. Good materials selection is based on a thorough knowledge of the community's needs, resources and problems. In selecting materials on controversial issues, the library must make every attempt to present differing points of view. In materials selection, popular demand must be recognized to the extent of maintaining community interest in, and support of, the library. However, materials selection by popular demand must still be guided by consideration of merit, use and balance. The selection of materials by Kittanning Public Library staff is geared to the interests of the majority of the public served and not to specific academic needs or special interest groups. Materials selected should be judged upon their authoritativeness and effectiveness of presentation. Each must be considered as a whole and not judged by any of its parts. The materials budget should be expended in such a way that the various demands made upon it are proportionately served. For example, in the area of controversial materials, a limited budget does not excuse a one-sided collection.

Each title suggested has to be analyzed before purchase. If the title requested does not meet the materials selection policy for the library, then a librarian is not justified in buying it. An honest, objective appraisal must be given before making any book purchase decision.

It should be noted that selection of any material should not be construed as an endorsement by the library of the views contained therein.

Criteria for Selection

The following is a list of general criteria to be considered in selection of library materials. This list is not in priority order, nor is it meant to be exhaustive.

- Insight into human and social conditions
- Suitability of subject and style for the intended audience
- Present and potential relevance to community needs and interest
- Timeliness or permanent value
- Relation to the existing collection
- Attention of critics and reviewers
- Scarcity of information in the subject area
- Availability of material elsewhere in the community
- Price, Format, & Authority
- Comprehensiveness and depth of treatment
- Clarity, accuracy and logic of treatment
- Vitality and originality
- Artistic presentation
- Authenticity of historical, regional or social setting
- Sustained interest and entertainment
- Selection of Non–print Materials (Adult and Juvenile)
- Selection of non–print materials is based on artistic and technical quality of the work as well as the value of the content for fulfilling the informational, recreational, and informational needs of our patrons.

Exclusion of Materials

The Library Director is expressly charged with the legal and professional obligation to execute, in good faith and the highest degree of skills, the collection development policy of the library. The Library Director is also professionally obligated to resist with equal good faith, skill and vigor, the efforts of every person or group, when directed to him or her, to compel a modification of materials selection or services based upon criteria substantially in conflict with policies established by the Board.

Some material may be purchased which are shocking to some users, but, if this material meets the standards of the written selection policy, the interest of the community and is relevant, the librarian is justified in purchasing the books and materials. Disapproval of an item by an individual or group should not be the means by which that item is denied to all individuals or groups.

Although materials written to trade on sensationalism are not knowingly added to the collection, works which present an honest and realistic picture of some problem or aspect of life are not excluded because of frankness of the language or description.

While the library supplements formal study with materials, it is not within the library's scope to support the curricula of area schools by providing multiple copies of books for use in or out of the classroom.

Library materials are not marked or labeled to indicate approval or disapproval of their contents. Library materials are selected in their entirety and not subject to modification or alteration by the library staff.

Weeding

Discarding of library materials is necessary to maintain a vital, useful, well–kept collection. The purpose of weeding is to reevaluate the collection in conjunction with the selection of new and

replacement materials. An active and continuous weeding program is essential in order to keep material viable and useful.

Any material taking up space that could otherwise be more profitably used for other materials is subject to reevaluation and discard by a collection manager. This includes older nonfiction that no longer contains current information and once-popular fiction no longer in demand. Among those attributes considered will be physical condition, number of copies available, use, adequate coverage in the field, and availability of similar material.

Criteria for Weeding

Selection of materials for discarding is based on the following criteria:

- Materials worn out through use
- Ephemeral materials which are no longer timely
- Materials no longer considered accurate or factual
- Materials which have had little recent use and are of questionable value
- Excess copies of a title no longer in demand

While the library attempts to have copies of standard and important works, it does not automatically replace all materials withdrawn. The same criteria that apply to original selection will also apply to replacements. The need for replacement based on:

- The number of duplicate copies
- Existence of adequate coverage of the subject in the collection
- Demand for the specific title or subject area
- Availability of material

Philosophy of Service and Intellectual Freedom

The Kittanning Public Library through its staff and facility serves multiple roles in the community. Primarily, the goal of the Library is to meet the informational, educational, recreational, and cultural needs of as many residents as possible, as consistently as possible. The Library strives to meet this goal by providing materials and information sources, based on availability and the guidelines set forth in the Library's Collection Development Policy, that present a wide range of viewpoints, in a variety of formats, and reading levels. No patron will be denied access by the Library to materials, information sources, or services based on age, race, beliefs, or affiliations.

Challenged Materials

Criticism of the library holdings will be registered and presented on a "Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" form and signed by the individual challenging the item. The item will be reviewed by the Director, who should refer to the selection criteria for the item and respond to the challenger appropriately. If the challenger wishes to pursue the issue, he or she may schedule an appointment with a representative of the Library Board. If the matter is not resolved by the board representative, it will be referred to the full Board whose decision will be final. In extreme cases, when the committee and the Board make a finding that an intrusion of intellectual freedom exists and cannot be resolved by conciliatory procedures, the Board may authorize one or more of the following actions: seeking legal advice; making accurate and complete information available to all local news media; reporting the incident to the American Library Association's Office of Intellectual Freedom and other appropriate entities.

In cases which involve intrusion of intellectual freedom coupled with the threat of dismissal against the Director and/or staff, the Board shall provide moral support to the librarian to resist,

provide factual support in documented evidence, and authorize monetary support for legal aid. If monetary support is required for legal aid, the Board shall determine whether such aid can best be furnished by the Pennsylvania Library Association, the American Library Association, or by such groups as the Freedom to Read Foundation or the American Civil Liberties Union.

Revision: This policy will be continuously reviewed by the staff and formally reviewed by the Board of Trustees at least every five years, being revised where needed.

Kittanning Public Library
Recommendation of Material for Purchase

Recommended by: _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Title of material: _____

Author of material: _____

Format of material: Book Video Software Cassettes Other _____

ISBN, if known: _____

Where did you see/hear about this material?

Thank You for Your Recommendation!

Patron's Request for Reconsideration of Library Material

Author: _____ Publisher (if known) _____

Title: _____

Form of material (i.e.: book, video, recording, etc.) _____

Request initiated by: _____

Address: _____

Telephone No. _____

Whom do you represent?

_____ Myself

_____ Organization (Please Specify)

_____ Other (Please Specify)

Did you read, see, listen to or otherwise use the material in its entirety?

_____ Yes; _____ No. If not, then which parts?

Have you seen or heard reviews of this material?

_____ Yes; _____ No

If yes, please name the source. _____

What do you think the material is about?

To what in the work do you object? (Please be specific)

What do you feel might be the result of reading, viewing, or hearing this work?

For what age group would you recommend this work? _____

Is there anything good about the work?

What would you like your library to do about this material?

In its place, what work would you recommend that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of the subjected treated?

Your Signature _____ Date _____

The Library appreciates your interest. Your comments will be forwarded to the Director, who will respond to you by letter.