

VIII. Collection Development/Materials Selection Policy

A. Objectives

An essential function of the Balsam Lake Public Library is to provide all individuals in the community with carefully selected books and other materials to aid the individual in the pursuit of education, information, research, pleasure, and the creative use of leisure time.

The library must have a selection policy with which to meet community interests and needs which is reflective of the volume of publishing, as well as the limitations of budget and space. The materials selection/collection development policy is used by the library staff in the selection of materials and also serves to acquaint the general public with the principles of selection.

The Library Bill of Rights, The Freedom to Read Statement, and The Freedom to View Statement have been endorsed by the Balsam Lake Public Library Board of Trustees and are integral parts of the policy.

The library neither encourages nor discourages any particular viewpoint. No material will be excluded because of the race, nationality, religion, gender, sexual orientation, political or social views of the author. Selection of materials by the library does not mean endorsement of the contents or the views expressed in those materials.

The Board of Trustees considers reading, listening, and viewing to be individual, private matters. The Board believes that full, confidential, and unrestricted access to information is essential for patrons to exercise their constitutional rights. While anyone is free to select or reject materials for themselves or their own minor child(ren), the freedom of others to read or inquire will not be restricted. Only parents and guardians have the right and responsibility to guide and direct the reading, listening and viewing choices of their own minor child(ren).

The library collection will be organized, marked, and maintained to help people find the materials they want. Any labeling, sequestering, or alteration of materials because of controversy surrounding the author or the subject matter will not be sanctioned.

The Board recognizes that library resources are not unlimited. Selection of materials must be consistent with budget allocations. Resource sharing with other libraries, and electronic and other methods of information access, are valid and necessary ways of meeting patron needs.

The collection development/materials selection policy, like all other policies, will be reviewed and/or revised as the need arises.

B. Responsibility for Selection

The ultimate responsibility for selection of library materials rests with the library director who operates within the framework of the policies determined by the Balsam Lake Public Library Board of Trustees. This responsibility may be shared with other members of the library staff; however, because the director must be available to answer to the library board and the general public for actual selections made, the director has the authority to reject or select any item contrary to the recommendations of the staff. Selections made within the guidelines of this policy shall be considered Board selections, and the Board shall assume full legal responsibility for such selections.

C. Criteria for Materials Selection

The main points considered in the selection of materials are:

- collection objectives;
- individual merit of each item;
- audience for material;
- popular appeal/ demand;
- significance of the subject to the community;
- existing library holdings;
- budget

Non-book materials, such as CDs, DVDs, video games, and electronic databases are selected and weeded according to the same criteria as book materials, in accordance with library roles.

New formats will be considered for purchase as demand and use dictates. Some titles may be purchased in several formats in order to serve the most patrons. Availability of items in the format, the cost per item and the library's ability to acquire and handle the items will also be factors in determining when a new format will be collected. Similar considerations will influence the decision to delete a format from the library's collection.

Reviews are a major source of information about new materials and are useful tools to guide selection. The primary sources of reviews are bibliographies and reviewing aids disseminated through reputable library resources.

The lack of a review or an unfavorable review shall not be the sole reason for rejecting a title which is in demand. Consideration is, therefore, given to requests from library patrons and books discussed on public media. Materials are judged on the basis of the work as a whole, not on a part taken out of context.

The Balsam Lake Public Library will also seek to identify and collect the works of local and regional writers within the scope of the selection policy and as funds are available to purchase materials.

D. Interlibrary Loan

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

In return for utilizing interlibrary loan to satisfy the needs of our patrons, the Balsam Lake Public Library agrees to lend its materials to other libraries through the same interlibrary loan network, and to make an effort to have its current holdings listed in a tool that is accessible by other libraries throughout the state.

E. Gifts and Donations

The library accepts gifts of books and other materials with the understanding that they will be added to the collection only if appropriate and needed. If they are not needed because of duplication, condition, or dated information the director can dispose of them as he/she sees fit. The same criteria of selection which are applied to library-purchased materials are applied to gifts.

Memorial gifts of books or money are also accepted with suitable bookplates placed in the book. Specific memorial books can be ordered for the library on request of a patron if the request meets the criteria established by the Board. Book selection will be made by the director if no specific book is requested. The Balsam Lake Public Library encourages and appreciates gifts and donations.

By law, the library is not allowed to appraise the value of donated materials, though it can provide an acknowledgment of receipt of the items if requested by the donor.

F. Weeding

An up-to-date, attractive and useful collection is maintained through a continual withdrawal and replacement process. Withdrawal of materials is dependent upon criteria such as age and condition of items, frequency of

circulation, relevance to the collection, and long-term or historical significance. Replacement of worn volumes is dependent upon current demand, usefulness, more recent acquisitions, and availability of newer editions. This ongoing process of weeding is the responsibility of the library director and staff. Withdrawn materials will be handled in a similar manner and under the same authority as donated materials.

G. Potential Problems or Challenges

The Balsam Lake Public 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 stated in this policy.

Responsibility for the reading choices of children rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection of library materials will not be inhibited by the possibility that materials may come into the possession of children.

Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of their contents, and no library material will be sequestered except to protect it from damage or theft.

H. Challenged Materials

Although materials are carefully selected, there can arise differences of opinion regarding suitable materials. Patrons requesting that material be withdrawn from or restricted within the collection may complete a *Statement of Concern About Library Resources* form which is available in the library. The inquiry will be placed on the agenda of the next regular meeting of the Balsam Lake Public Library Board of Trustees.