

MATERIALS SELECTION & RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS POLICY

The Mission Statement

1. Purpose

The intent of the Smithtown Special Library District's materials selection policy is to guide librarians and to inform the public regarding the bases upon which selections are determined.

The Library establishes as its major goal in materials selection the securing for all residents of the community, educational, cultural and recreational materials suited to serve the desires and needs of the Library's constituency.

The Library does not endorse any particular viewpoint or belief represented in its collection.

2. Definitions

The word 'materials' under the policy's terms is to have the widest possible meaning. It includes (but is not limited to) books (hardbound and paperbound), pamphlets, maps, magazines and journals, newspapers, manuscripts, films, sound and video recordings, and electronic resources.

3. Responsibility for Materials Selection

The ultimate responsibility for selection rests with the Library Director who operates within the framework of the policies and directives generated by the Board of Trustees. The Director authorizes other staff to apply this policy in building and maintaining the Library collection.

4. Criteria of Selection

The following basic principles are to be applied as guidelines for materials selection. Each standard should be respected in considering materials' inclusion in the Library's collection:

1. Accomplishment of this policy's intent;
2. Authority and competency of the author, composer, filmmaker, etc.
3. Comprehensiveness in breadth and scope;
4. Integrity and fundamental objectivity;
5. Clarity and forthrightness of presentation;
6. Appropriateness to the interests of patrons;

7. Synchronicity to the existing collection;
8. Relative significance in comparison with other materials on the subject;
9. Importance as a reflection of the times for present and future use;
10. Technical quality of the material.

5. Use of Library Material

The Library recognizes that many materials are controversial and that any given item may have the potential to be objectionable to certain library users. Selections will not be made on the basis of any anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the works in relation to building the collection and to serving the interests of a community possessing diverse perspectives.

Library materials will not be identified in any manner to suggest approval or disapproval of contents, and no item will be sequestered except for the express purpose of protecting it from injury or theft.

The inclusion of rare and scarce items of significant value may be controlled to the extent required to preserve them from harm.

The Responsibility for the reading, listening, and/or viewing of library materials by children rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection will not be inhibited by the possibility that materials may inadvertently come into the view or possession of children absent parental oversight.

6. Guidelines for Selection

1. The Library adheres to the principles contained in the American Library Association Bill of Rights and the American Library Association statement on "Freedom to Read."
2. The Library recognizes the existence of resources of other libraries and shall seek to avoid duplicating functions and materials. Through mutually agreed-upon cooperative ventures, the resources of these libraries will be made available to the community.
3. The Library recognizes the educational programs for students of all ages provided by the educational institutions in the community. Textbooks and curriculum-related materials for these programs are provided only where the materials also serve the general public or where they provide information not otherwise readily available.
4. Legal and medical works will be acquired to the extent they are useful to the informed layman. The public library collection is not intended to be a specialized collection serving the professions.
5. The Library acknowledges general interest in local history. Therefore, it will seek to acquire related materials.

Policy 300-10

6. Because the Library serves a public embracing a wide range of ages, educational backgrounds, and reading abilities, it will always seek to select materials of varying levels of complexity.
7. In selecting materials for the collection, the Library will consider the special, commercial, industrial, cultural, and civic enterprises of the community.
8. Criteria for consideration will also include pertinent professional reviews, popular demand, literary merit and critical acclaim.

7. Gifts

The Library may accept gifts of materials, but reserves the right to evaluate and dispose of them as it deems appropriate. No specific conditions are to be imposed relating to any gift either before or after its acceptance by the Library. Upon request, the Library will provide an acknowledgment of a donation but the Library does not provide valuations of gifts for tax deductions or other purposes.

8. Local Author Collection

The Library supports and seeks to cultivate the literary expression of the community by way of the establishment of the "Local Author Collection". Authors who reside, or work in, (or who originate from the Town of Smithtown) may donate one physical copy per title of their published work (up to three titles per calendar year) to be considered for inclusion in the collection. Materials included in the "Local Author Collection" will be considered under the same selection and retention guidelines as are applicable to the Library's current print collections.

9. Reconsideration of Material

Procedures have been developed for the reconsideration of materials to assure that objections or complaints are processed in an objective and consistent manner. Once an item has been accepted for purchase, based on the Materials Selection Policy of the Library Board of Trustees and the criteria for selection, it will only be removed pursuant to this policy's procedure set forth below.

10. Reconsideration of Library Materials Procedure

Utilizing library materials by patrons is an individual matter. While a person may reject materials for himself/herself, he/she/they, may not seek to effectively exercise censorship to restrict access to materials by others.

Individuals who reside in the Smithtown Special Library District may formally question the appropriateness of a particular item in the Library's collection through the submission to the Library Director of a *Request for Reevaluation of Library Material* form, available in each of the Library's buildings and at smithlib.org.

The following procedures have been developed to assure that objections or complaints are processed in an objective and consistent manner:

1. The patron making the request for reconsideration must complete a *Request for Reevaluation of Library Material* form. [Appended to this policy.]
2. A request for reevaluation will be referred to a committee consisting of the Library Director and at least two professionals on the Library staff of the director's choosing, who possess knowledge of the disputed item.
3. The committee will reconsider the item in question referring to its procurement under the Materials Selection Policy and reviews from recognized sources. They will then recommend one of several actions: (a)retain the material, (b)retain the material but move it to another location or (c)withdraw the material.
4. The Library Director will review the recommendation of the Review Committee and then communicate to the patron the Director's determination.
5. The Director will keep the Board of Trustees informed of the receipt of the *Reevaluation of Library Material* form, the committee's recommendation and the Director's determination.

If so desired, the patron may appeal the Director's determination in writing to The Smithtown Library Board of Trustees; the Board will provide the ultimate determination and will determine if such requires an oral presentation by the patron seeking reconsideration.

11. Maintaining the Collection

Materials which no longer serve a purpose based on circulation, physical condition, usefulness, age, and accuracy will be removed from the collection.

Policy 300-10

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