

MANUAL OF LIBRARY POLICIES

SUBJECT: Collection Development

Resolution No. 220221-6

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**Mission Statement**

The mission of the Stow-Munroe Falls Public Library is to provide excellence of library service to all who seek access to information and recreational, educational, and cultural materials in any format. It also aims to promote the well-being of the community through programs and cooperative efforts with other community agencies, public and private. The Stow-Munroe Falls Public Library will help create a community where ideas, culture, and knowledge thrive by providing materials, equipment, and service to all people.

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Responsibility for Selection**

The Stow-Munroe Falls Public Library welcomes and values all people, striving to provide an inclusive environment for patrons and staff. SMFPL is responsive to the needs of the community, and seeks to dismantle barriers, while providing equitable access and services to all people, regardless of race, ethnicity, age, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, ability, or economic status.

**Objectives of the Library's Collection**

The role of the Stow-Munroe Falls Public Library shall be to enhance the educational, informational, recreational, cultural, and social growth of the community. To these ends, the library:

1. Provides significant books and other printed, recorded, or electronic materials.
2. Organizes materials to facilitate their use.
3. Provides guidance and aid to the people in their use of the library's resources.
4. Promotes the continued self-development of the public in the direction of cultural, creative, educational, and recreational goals.

**Responsibility for Materials Selections**

Responsibility for selection of books, recorded materials, electronic resources, and eclectic items is, and shall be vested in the library director. However, the library director may delegate to such members of the staff as qualified by reason of training, the authority to interpret and guide the application of the policy in making day-to-day selection. Any library materials so selected shall be held to be selected by the board. Questions concerning materials or resources will be referred to the director for resolution.

Stow-Munroe Falls Public Library supports and is supported by the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read, and the Freedom to View, which affirm that free and convenient access to ideas, information, and creative experience is of vital importance to every citizen today. These documents are guiding principles for this material development policy.

### **Principles**

No policy can replace the judgment of librarians. Instead, this policy will aid in the selection of library material. Good material selection must be based on a thorough knowledge of the community's needs, resources, and issues, combined with a thorough knowledge of the library's collection and overall balance.

The selection of all library material should be as objective as possible. Selection influenced by personal prejudice, especially when rejecting an item is censorship. When selecting material of a controversial nature, members of the library's Selection Committee will make every attempt to present balanced points of view and opinion. Popular demand will be considered to maintain community interest in and support of the library; however, material selection by popular demand must be guided by consideration of merit, use, cost, and balance in the library's overall collection. Selectors will abide by both the Freedom to Read policy and the Library Bill of Rights.

The materials budget will be expanded to meet the demands placed upon it, and to ensure that those demands are proportionately served. Regarding areas of controversial material, a limited budget cannot excuse a one-sided collection.

Each suggested title must be given an honest, objective appraisal analysis prior to purchase. If a requested title does not meet the library's Collection Development Policy, the Selection Committee member is not justified in buying it. Selection by the library staff of any material should not be construed as the library's endorsement of the views or opinions held therein.

### **Criteria for Selection**

Certain factors influence the selection of library materials. Among these are:

- The importance of subject matter to the collection
- The community
- Appropriateness of format for intended use and audience
- Availability of material, for loan or for purchase
- Timeliness or enduring nature of the material
- Authoritativeness
- Inclusion in standard or local bibliographies or indexes
- Costs
- Physical characteristics, including ease of use, durability, and clarity of presentation

## **Formats**

Suggestions from the public are welcome and will be considered and evaluated. The selection of new materials will be made according to merit and potential use. Some consideration will be given to demand. All decisions on new material will be based upon the reviews and criticism appearing in selection aids, periodicals, brochures, and bibliographies, and/or upon the reading and examination of the materials by staff members.

## **Scope of the Collection**

The collection will be built upon representative materials including those which portray divergent, avant-garde, and controversial points of view, providing library patrons with resources upon which conclusions may be drawn after a free examination of all sides of an issue.

The library recognizes its obligations to provide reference and research materials both for the direct answering of specific questions and for continuing research. It also recognizes the purposes and resources of other libraries in the community and shall make effective use of interlibrary networks.

## **Adult Services Collection**

The Adult Information Department has an extensive collection of materials included but not limited to books, graphic novels, recorded materials, digital materials, magazines, eclectic items, and the local history collection.

## **Local History Archives**

The Stow-Munroe Falls Public Library will collect such materials, including works by local residents, as are necessary to preserve the history of Stow and Munroe Falls, and to a lesser extent, the surrounding areas of Summit and Portage Counties. The library will make every effort to collect and preserve old and current materials for use in meeting the research, educational, and recreational needs of its patrons. Furthermore, the Local History archives should hold works about Ohio and Summit County that will aid patrons in putting the history of Stow and Munroe Falls in perspective.

## **Eclectic Collection**

The Eclectic Collection is an assortment of nontraditional items that complement our mission to provide excellence in library service to all who seek access to information, recreational, educational, and cultural materials of any format.

The Library will select materials for the Eclectic Collection based on the needs and interests of library patrons. The Library reserves the right to take an item out of circulation temporarily to use for library purposes (programs, training, etc.) or for repairs.

## **Teen Services Collection**

A collection representing the recreational and information needs and interests of teens, ages 13-18, including advanced juvenile titles and appropriate adult titles, will be provided. Curriculum-related, reference, and in-depth subject materials are supported in the general collection for use by students of all ages and of diverse backgrounds. The same criteria for selection of adult materials apply to teen materials. The content, style, format, and appeal to teens are taken into consideration. The Teen collection consists of books, graphic novels, recorded materials, videogames, and electronic resources.

## **Youth Services Collection**

The Children's Department has an extensive collection of materials including but not limited to picture books, board books, beginning readers, chapter books, graphic novels, nonfiction books, recorded materials, and digital materials.

The library recognizes the unique needs of its young patrons and will make every effort to select resources that address those needs. The materials in the Children's collection are selected in a variety of formats for children from infancy through fifth grade. Materials are chosen to reflect a wide range of interests and cognitive and reading abilities, within this age group, and to instill a love of reading and learning. Children's books are selected following the same principles as for adult materials. However, certain elements are emphasized in greater detail. The criteria used are:

- Elements of permanent value
- Creativity
- Clarity and style in writing
- Excellence of illustration
- Outstanding design and format
- Respect for the personality of the reader
- Appropriateness of the subject and its treatment for the reader
- Variety of formats to address various learning styles
- Acceptance by readers

## **Government Documents**

The Stow Munroe Falls Public Library is not a depository library for state or federal documents.

## **Textbooks and Curriculum Related Materials**

The library strives to provide materials that promote continued independent learning. We believe that providing textbooks and curriculum materials is the responsibility of the schools, but we will strive to provide some curriculum related materials. Selectors will purchase textbooks for the collection only if the textbook supplies information that surpasses standard books in quality or scope. The public library will not assume the responsibility for purchasing textbooks for wide and general distribution.

## **Local Authors**

In recognition of local literary and creative efforts, the library includes works by local authors in its collection. When works by local authors or creators are being considered for inclusion, the selection criteria outlined in this policy may be relaxed or modified at the discretion of the Selection Committee or the Library Director.

## **Self-Published Materials**

The library is happy to consider recently published materials for the collection.

The library routinely acquires materials published by commercial publishers that meet the library's selection criteria. The library also may buy self-published books when they include unique local content, fit the scope of the library's Collection Development Policy, and meet the selection criteria.

Materials receiving an independent, positive review in one or more of the major review journals (such as Library Journal, School Library Journal, Kirkus Reviews, Booklist, Publisher's Weekly and Video Librarian) are carefully considered. The library is more likely to add a self-published book to the collection if it has been reviewed in a major review journal. Self-published eBooks are not considered unless they are available for purchase through one of the library's eBook platforms.

## **Unsolicited Materials**

The library does not pay for unsolicited material. Materials sent to the library become the property of the Stow-Munroe Falls Public Library and, if not added, will not be returned to the donor.

## **Maintaining the Collection**

Systematic withdrawal of materials is no longer useful to maintain relevant resources. The same criteria will be used in weeding materials from the collection as are used in their acquisition. The decision to withdraw library material shall be based on the physical condition, use of the material, age of the material, and accuracy of the information.

## **Retention of Library Materials**

Discarding library materials is necessary to maintain a vital, useful, and well-ordered collection. The purpose of weeding is to support a regular re-evaluation of the collection in conjunction with the selection of new and replacement material. An active and continuous weeding program is essential to maintain a viable and useful collection. Approximately 5% of the total collection will be withdrawn annually, and Selection Committee members handle weeding the specific subject areas for which they select.

Any material taking up space that could otherwise be more profitably used by other material that is not circulating is subject to reevaluation and may be discarded by a collection committee member or the Library Director. This includes nonfiction that is no longer current or accurate, and once-popular fiction that is no longer in demand.

## **Criteria for Weeding**

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

- Material worn or irreparable through use
- Material which is no longer timely
- Material no longer considered accurate or factual
- Material which has had little recent use and is of questionable value
- Excess copies of a specific title that is no longer in demand

While the library attempts to maintain copies of standard and important works, it does not automatically replace all materials that have been withdrawn. The Library's collection is not intended to be and shall not be considered archival. The same criteria that apply to the original selection also will apply to material replacement. The need for replacement is based on:

- Number of available duplicate copies
- Adequate coverage of a particular subject in the collection
- Demand for the specific title or subject area
- Availability of material through other CLEVNET Libraries

Replacement and duplication of older titles is extensive in the Children's collection as children read and reread favorite books from previous decades.

## **Lost and Replacements**

Materials missing or withdrawn from the library's collection are not automatically replaced. The decision to replace items rests on the following criteria:

- Availability of other copies in the collection
- Public interest
- Adequacy of coverage of subject matter
- Cost/availability

## **Gifts, Donations, Memorials, Bequests, and Trusts**

The same principles of selection applied to purchases are applied to gifts. The library accepts gifts of books, pamphlets, magazines, films, music recordings, etc., with the understanding that they will be added to the library collection when needed or will be disposed of if the material is not of value to the library's collection at the time.

Items sometimes are accepted as gifts although they ordinarily would not be purchased. These include replacements, expensive items of limited interest, local, privately printed, or highly technical materials.

The library welcomes gifts, trusts, or bequests for the purchase of library material. A bookplate will identify the donor and organization or person for whom the donation was made.

## **Censorship Policies**

The Library Director is expressly charged with the legal and professional obligation to execute, in good faith and with the highest degree of skills, the Library's Collection Development Policy. The Director has a professional obligation to resist with equal good faith, skill and vigor, all efforts by any person or group, when directed to him or her, to compel a modification of material selection or services based upon criteria that are substantially in conflict with the policies established by the library's Board of Trustees.

No material will be excluded because of race, nationality, disability, age, political, social, or religious views of the originator. By providing free and unrestricted access to diverse information and viewpoints, the library may serve as a cornerstone of the principles of a democratic society.

The selection of library materials and electronic resources is predicated on the library patron's right to read and, similarly, on freedom from censorship by others. Much material is controversial, and any given item may offend some people. Selections for this library will not, however, be made based on anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the material in relation to the building of the collection, and to serving the interests of the users.

Fictional works are selected based on individual merit. The quality of materials shall be judged on the content, not by detached excerpts. Incident and language of materials should be in keeping with the social, moral, and emotional background of the characters, and the setting. Serious works which present an honest picture of some problems or aspects of life are not necessarily excluded because of objectionable language or frankness. Any attempt by an individual or group to deny access to, or to force inclusion or exclusion, of materials or resources will be resisted.

From time-to-time materials may be purchased for the Library that some users might find shocking and/or inappropriate. However, if such materials meet the standards of this Collection Development Policy, the interests and standards of the community and are of relevant value, the Library is justified in buying such materials. Disapproval of an item by an individual or group should not be how that item is denied to all individuals or groups.

Although materials of a sensational nature are not knowingly added to the collection, works that present an honest and realistic picture of controversial issues or aspects of life are not excluded because of the frankness of language, description, or depiction.

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

Library materials are not marked or labeled in any way that indicates approval or disapproval of their contents. Labels or ratings that provide assessments such as "This material contains language that some may find offensive" are not applied to the item by the library. Materials are selected in their entirety and not subject to modification or alteration by the library staff.

This library holds censorship to be a purely individual matter and declares that, while anyone is free to reject for oneself materials or resources of which one does not approve, one cannot exercise this right of censorship to restrict the freedom of others.

With respect to the use of library materials and resources by children, the decision as to what a minor may use is the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian. Selection of materials and resources for the entire library collection is not restricted by the possibility that minors might access materials and resources that their parents consider inappropriate.

### **Copyright Law**

The Stow Munroe Falls Public Library abides by copyright law. Customers using the library materials are responsible for the legal use of that material.

### **Procedures for Reconsideration of Library Material**

The library will reconsider any material in its collection upon written request of a patron. If a complaint is made, the following procedures are followed:

1. Staff or board members will refer the patron to make a written complaint to the library director, using the *Request for Reconsideration* form.
2. If the complaint has not been resolved through informal discussion with the director and written response, the complaint will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees and the director.
3. A review committee will be formed to review the materials. The officers of the board and the director will compose a response. At the discretion of the director, upon receipt of the reconsideration form, the challenged material may be temporarily removed from the collection to facilitate the review, until a decision about the material has been made.
4. The Review Committee will review the material and then evaluate the original reasons for the purchase. Works are judged in their entirety, not by passages or scenes taken out of context. The committee determines the extent to which the material fits the selection policy, and files a written recommendation to the full library board.
5. The library board makes the final decision regarding the complaint.
6. The patron will receive a written response from the director informing them of the decision of the board.