

C. MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Canton Public Library Materials Selection Policy is to set broad guidelines in order to assemble, preserve, organize, administer and promote the use of a wide range of communication media and to inform the public about the principles upon which selections are made. These functions are undertaken to further the objectives of the Canton Public Library.

2. DEFINITIONS

The term “library materials” means books, magazines, DVDs, CDs, or other synonyms as they may occur in the policy have the widest possible meaning. It is implicit in this statement of policy, therefore, that every form of permanent record is to be included regardless of format. However, this policy and the term “library materials” do not apply to Internet sites available through the Library’s computers or Internet collection. The Library has no control over the content of the Internet. Please see the [Computing Resources Policy](#) for any issues related to computer or Internet use.

The term “selection” refers to the decision to add, retain or withdraw material in the collection. It does not refer to reader guidance.

This statement of policy applies to all library materials in the collection, including adult, teen, and children’s.

3. GOALS OF MATERIAL SELECTION

- A. To meet the individual’s need for information through maintenance of a well-balanced and broad collection of materials for information, reference and research.
- B. To help the individual attain maximum self-development through life-long intellectual and cultural growth.
- C. To support the democratic process by providing materials for the education and enlightenment of the community.
- D. To assist individuals in their pursuit of occupational activity and practical affairs.
- E. To provide diverse recreational experience for individuals and groups.
- F. To assist institutions of formal education with services which will assist individual study.

4. RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION

The responsibility for selection lies with the Director or his/her designee pursuant to the [Collection Development Plan](#). Both the general public and staff members may recommend materials for consideration. The ultimate responsibility for book selection, however, rests with the Library Director who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Library Board of Trustees. The Director shall be responsible for ensuring that the funds budgeted for collection development are

allocated appropriately depending upon the needs of the Library and the fulfillment of the above Goals of Material Selection.

5. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- A. Selection of materials is based on the relationship of such work to the needs, interests and demands of the Canton community. Basic to this policy is the [Library Bill of Rights](#) and the [Freedom to Read Statement](#) of the American Library Association to which this library subscribes.

Selection is not made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the value of a work to the collection.

Whenever censorship is threatened, from whatever sources, no library materials shall be removed from the library until all steps in the library's procedure for handling complaints about library material have been completed, or by order of a court or competent jurisdiction.

- B. Responsibility for the reading matter of children rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection shall not be inhibited solely by the possibility that books may inadvertently come into the possession of children.

The library respects each individual parent's right to supervise his children's choice of reading materials. However, the library does not have the right to act *in loco parentis* (in place of the parent). Therefore, a parent who chooses to restrict the materials his/her children select must accompany those children when they use the collection in order to impose those restrictions.

- C. Library materials will not be marked or identified to indicate approval or disapproval of contents by the library, and no catalogued book or other item will be sequestered, except for the express purpose of protecting it from injury or theft. The use of rare and scholarly items of great value may be controlled to the extent required to preserve them from harm, but no further.
- D. It is the responsibility of the library to provide circulating, reference and research materials for the general public and the student based on the services it is expected to perform. Special "in depth" collections shall also be maintained when indicated by community interest.

6. SPECIFIC PRINCIPLES FOR SELECTION

The following principles, individually or collectively, will prevail in the selection of all library materials. The total collection will attempt to represent opposing points of view.

- a. Contemporary significance or permanent value
- b. Accuracy
- c. Lack of bias, factual
- d. Avoids sensationalism for its own sake
- e. Portrays issues sensitively
- f. Authority of author
- g. Relation of work to existing collection

- h. Price, format and ease of use
- i. Scarcity of information in subject area
- j. Available shelf or storage space
- k. Availability of material through interlibrary loan
- l. Popular demand: The library will make materials available which are in high demand by the public even if they are not enduring in value, interest or accuracy.
- m. Duplication of materials already in the collection; i.e. purchase of additional copies of materials, shall be governed by intrinsic or historical value, or immediate need.

7. COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Individual librarians will be responsible for maintaining their assigned collections utilizing the Collection Development Plan, which they review and update annually. Updates to the Collection Development Plan are approved by the Library Director or his/her designee.

This plan supports the activities of the Canton Public Library by serving the following key purposes:

- a. Guiding staff in the selection, management and preservation of the collection and the allocation of funds.
- b. Facilitating continuity in library collection development practices by preserving the library's institutional memory.
- c. Affirming the library's commitment to intellectual freedom and equal access and to providing collections that reflect diverse viewpoints.

8. TEXTBOOKS

Schools have the responsibility of providing textbooks and curriculum materials. Textbooks shall be purchased for the collection only when they supply information in areas in which they may be the best, or the only, source of information on the subject.

9. GIFTS

Acceptance of gifts of materials shall be governed by the same principles and criteria applied to the selection of items for purchase. Gifts of books or other materials which do not accord with the library's objectives and policies/Collection Development Plan will be refused. No conditions may be imposed relating to any item either prior to or after its acceptance by the library. All gifts and donated materials (including works of local authors) become the property of the library. The manner of disposition of any materials which are not added to the collection will be decided by the library. Non-materials gifts are addressed in the *Policy and Procedure Manual: General Operation Policy/Gifts*.

10. MAINTENANCE OF THE COLLECTION

The collection shall be periodically examined according to the guidelines set forth in the Collection Development Plan for the purpose of eliminating obsolete or unneeded materials, and for binding or repair of materials, in order to maintain a balanced, attractive and useful collection.

11. COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

No material shall be removed from the library's collection until all steps in the following process have been completed.

- A. Canton Public Library cardholders who object to particular library materials will be directed to the Library Director or his/her designee.
- B. The Library Director or his/her designee will discuss the library materials in question with the patron, attempting to resolve the concern to both the patron's and library's satisfaction.
- C. If the patron wishes to carry the complaint further, the Library Director or his/her designee will provide the patron with a copy of the materials selection policy and the Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Materials form.
- D. When the patron has returned the completed Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Materials form to the Library Director or his/her designee, s/he will read the request form and convene a Materials Reconsideration Committee within fourteen days of receipt of the completed request form. The Library Director or his/her designee at this point will contact the complainant and outline the reconsideration process.
- E. The ad hoc Materials Reconsideration Committee will consist of three to four library staff who (1) are not Department Heads; (2) are appointed by the Library Director; and (3) are familiar with the age group, genre, and format of the materials in question. The Library Director shall designate one librarian to Chair the Materials Reconsideration Committee, who is responsible for submitting the Committee's written recommendation along with critical reviews of the work to the Library Director.
- F. This committee shall meet and thoroughly review the questioned materials. The Committee shall send its recommendation along with critical reviews of the work to the Library Director within 60 days of receipt of the completed request form. The Library Director and Department Heads shall discuss the Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Materials and the committee's report, taking into consideration the library's materials selection policy to reach a decision. The Library Director shall send the decision in writing to the complainant within 75 days of the receipt of the completed request form.
- G. If the decision is that the questioned material should be removed from the collection, the complainant will be notified in writing by the Library Director and all copies of the item will be withdrawn.
- H. If the decision is that the questioned material is to be retained, the complainant will be notified in writing by the Library Director that the material will be retained.
- I. A written appeal of the decision may be made by the complainant to the Chair of the Library Board within 10 business days. The Library Board will review the documentation and render their decision within 60 days of receipt of the complainant's appeal.

Canton Public Library Board of Trustees

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- J. The Library Board serves as the final authority in cases involving retention or withdrawal of library materials.

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