

Collection Development Policy

INTRODUCTION

The Collection Development Policy presents the strategies the Library uses to develop, expand, maintain, and manage a 21st Century library collection which meets the needs of both the residents of the Kent City School District and the Library. The Library serves the entire community, from birth through seniors, and acknowledges that the community we serve is comprised of diverse cultures, religious beliefs, political ideologies, educational experiences, identities and backgrounds.

The Library, through its Collection Development Policy, strives to:

- Meet the educational, recreational, informational, and cultural needs of the community and citizens of Kent
- Provide materials that entertain and enhance one's enjoyment of life
- Offer a well-rounded and balanced collection offering materials in a variety of formats, genres, and subjects including diverse viewpoints and voices
- Continue the Library's tradition of staying current with new and emerging materials and formats to incorporate them into the collection as appropriate
- Ensure intellectual freedom for all users, understanding that in a democratic society individuals are free to explore any and all information to determine what is appropriate for their needs
- Follow the guidelines stated by the American Library Association in its Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read and Freedom to View statements
- Participate in cooperative sharing agreements to expand our ability to make materials accessible to patrons

Parents and legal guardians have the responsibility for their children's use of materials in the Library's collection. Selection of materials for the collection will not be restricted by the possibility that minors may obtain materials that a parent or guardian might consider inappropriate for their child. The Library does not act *in loco parentis*. Library staff are available to assist patrons with specific requests in identifying appropriate materials for their children.

All libraries are likely to contain materials that some patrons may find objectionable. In addition, library collections may not contain all materials that some patrons feel are important. The library has procedures to hear and consider these voices in the community. Please see the *Suggestion for Purchase and Reconsideration of Materials* section of this policy.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION

Collection Development is the responsibility of the Library Director who operates within the framework of policies and budget determined by the Board of Trustees. The Director may delegate material selection and collection maintenance duties to Library staff who are qualified for the task by education, training, knowledge and interest. However, the Director retains final authority to approve or reject any items selected by staff.

GENERAL SELECTION STANDARDS

The collection offers materials for the public in a variety of formats and levels of difficulty. "Materials" has the widest possible meaning and includes, but is not limited to, print and audiovisual items available in physical, electronic, digital or streaming formats.

The Library is limited by both its budget and physical storage space in the building. This limits the Library's ability to purchase, stock and store materials. As such, materials are selected based on some or all of the criteria listed below. Items need not meet all of the criteria to be acceptable nor will a single criteria be decisive. The order of the criteria below does not reflect relative importance.

- Public interest, popularity, and demand
- Timeliness or currency of subject matter
- Reputation of the author/illustrator/artist/creator/publisher/producer
- Positive reviews in peer reviewed journals and professional resources
- Reviews in popular media including magazines, television, and newspapers
- Recommendations by professional critics
- Accuracy
- Educational significance
- Contribution to the breadth of representative viewpoints
- Number and nature of requests from the public
- Relevance to the Kent community
- Quality of illustrations
- Cost and availability
- Circulation of similar materials
- Duplication of other resources
- Suitability of physical format for library use
- Literary and artistic merit

In addition, Library staff have the professional responsibility to be inclusive, not exclusive, in collection development. Efforts are made to represent a wide diversity of views. The Library will provide access to materials even if such materials may offend some patrons in the community or a member of the Library staff.

Materials are evaluated as a whole, not on the basis of a particular section or sections. Thus, an item will not be included or excluded because of:

- The race, religion, nationality, sexual orientation or identification, or views of the author, illustrator, or creator
- Depictions or descriptions of violence or sexual activity
- Controversial content

- Endorsement or disapproval by an individual or group in the community

The library strives to provide material that promotes continual, independent learning. Library materials will compliment classroom learning in local schools, but the Library will not duplicate school libraries. The Library does not acquire textbooks, academic journals, syllabus-specific materials or multiple copies of titles in sufficient quantity to meet the assignment demands of local schools, colleges, universities or non-library book clubs. The Library reserves the right to allow an exception for titles selected as summer reading assignments for Kent City Schools.

COLLECTION MAINTENANCE

Materials in the collection are consistently and constantly evaluated and monitored by Library staff. Materials are discarded from the collection if they are surplus to the needs of the library, their information has become obsolete, or they are physically worn or otherwise unusable. Replacement will be determined by the appropriate Library staff who will determine whether or not:

- The item is still available to purchase and can be replaced
- Another item or format might better serve the same purpose
- There remains sufficient need to replace the item
- An updated, newer or revised material can better replace the item
- The item has historical value
- Another institution could provide the same item or a comparable item
- Space is available in the collection

Titles de-selected or weeded from the collection at the Library's discretion will be donated to the Friends of Kent Free Library unless the physical condition of the item requires disposal.

DOWNLOADABLE AND STREAMING CONTENT

Technology provides the means for the Library to deliver digital content directly to patrons. The Library offers patrons access to multiple digital collections in which materials are available to instantly download or stream. While Library staff are able to select some titles included in some of the digital collections, the majority of the content provided by such services is not selected by Library staff. Instead, digital content is provided as a package of titles from the vendor or consortium of libraries participating in the service.

LOCAL HISTORY AND GENEALOGY

The Library will collect, protect, and make available local history materials with a special emphasis on, or relationship to, Kent and Portage County. Donations of local history materials are welcomed to enhance the collection's usefulness and size. If a donated item is unsuitable for the Library's collection, it may be offered to the Kent Historical Society or to the Portage County Historical Society. Based on the type of donated material, Library staff may refer donors to either historical society rather than accepting the donation for the Library.

RESOURCE SHARING WITH OTHER LIBRARIES

The library is a member of the Portage Library Consortium, SearchOhio, and OhioLINK. Each of these consortiums make their materials available for Kent patrons to request through a shared catalog. Such direct access may be considered an adequate substitute for local ownership when deciding whether to purchase a

title for the Library's collection. Convenient resource sharing is not a substitute for strong collection development and the availability of a title through a consortium does not preclude purchase of the same title for the local collection. The Library also recognizes our responsibility to assist in meeting consortium-wide demand for popular titles, even if there exists less demand locally.

SELF-PUBLISHING AND LOCAL AUTHORS

The publishing industry has seen an increase in self-published works. The Library reserves the right to only purchase self-published books that are reviewed in professional journals. When professional reviews do not exist, the library may accept some self-published books containing local information and local history. Library staff will evaluate those titles to determine if they are suitable for the library's collection.

Residents of Kent who have published a book may donate a single copy for inclusion on the local authors' shelf. Proof of current Kent residence may be requested by library staff. Donated books are subject to all sections of the *Collection Development Policy* and the *Donation Policy*. In addition, they are subject to the same standards for continued inclusion in the collection as all other materials.

DONATIONS, GIFTS AND MEMORIALS

The Library accepts or rejects donated materials according to the Library's *Donation Policy*. All gifts or donations of materials are subject to evaluation by the general selection standards above. Donors are informed that any gift or donation of materials may or may not be added to the collection. Items which are not added to the Library's collection may be donated to another institution or they will be donated to the Friends of Kent Free Library for a future book sale. Funds raised from Friends of the Library sales are used to benefit Kent Free Library. Gifts or donations of funds to enrich the Library's collection are always welcome.

Memorial donations are a thoughtful way to honor someone's memory or to acknowledge a special occasion. Donors may suggest the subject areas, genres, authors or formats to be considered for purchase using memorial donation funds. Every effort will be made by Library staff to choose materials which will both benefit the Library's collection and please the donors. A memorial plate will be included in the material if requested.

SUGGESTION FOR PURCHASE AND RECONSIDERATION OF MATERIALS

On occasion, a patron may find a title that they would like added to or removed from the collection.

When a patron requests that a title be added to the Library's collection:

- a. Library staff provide a **Request for Purchase Form** to the patron. Completed forms are submitted to the Library Director, or his or her designee, for consideration.
- b. The Library Director, or his or her designee, will notify the patron of the purchase decision within ten (10) days if notification is requested.
- c. A **Request for Purchase Form** should not to be used by local authors or illustrators wishing to add or donate their own book to the library's collection. See the *Self-Publishing and Local Authors* section of this policy for more information.

When a patron requests that a title be removed from the Library's collection:

- a. Library staff will discuss the collection development policy with the patron. A packet of supporting information is available to share with the patron.
- b. Following the discussion, if the patron still wishes the Library to reconsider a title, he or she should complete a **Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials Form**.
- c. The request will be referred to a collection development committee for review.
- d. The patron will be informed in writing of (1) the receipt of the request and (2) the committee's decision. Allow up to thirty (30) days for a response.
- e. If the patron is not satisfied with the decision, he or she may appeal in writing to the Library's Board of Trustees. The Board will make a decision and inform the patron in writing, usually following the next regularly scheduled Board meeting.

A title will not be reconsidered unless the patron making the request has read, viewed or heard the entire item. A reconsideration request submitted without the name of the person making the objection will not be considered. If the material has previously been reconsidered, it will not be reconsidered again unless the more recent request is based on substantially different reasons than an earlier request.

Titles under consideration will remain in the collection throughout the process to support the freedom of other patrons to read, view, or listen.

Kent Free Library and the Library's Board of Trustees support intellectual freedom and freedom of speech. The Library and its Board subscribe to the principles of the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights and its statements on the Freedom to Read and the Freedom to View.

Supporting Documents

- American Library Association Bill of Rights
- American Library Association Freedom to Read Statement
- American Library Association Freedom to View Statement
- Request for Purchase Form
- Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials Form

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