

## **Materials Selection Policy**

### **Section 1: Introduction**

The Materials Selection Policy of the Arkansas River Valley Regional Library System has been formulated to serve as a guide for authorized personnel in the selection of library materials, to inform the public as to the criteria upon which library materials are selected and withdrawn, and to provide a method for registering and responding to public complaints regarding materials in the library collection. This policy is region wide.

The Arkansas River Valley Regional Library System supports intellectual freedom and subscribes to the *Library Bill of Rights*, the *Freedom to Read Statement*, and the related supportive documents of the American Library Association.

### **Section 2: Responsibility for selection**

The responsibility for selecting library materials is delegated by the Library Board of Trustees of each county represented to the Library Director and, under his/her direction, to other staff who are qualified for this activity by reason of training and/or experience.

### **Section 3: Sources for selection**

Reviews in professional library periodicals are primary sources for materials selection. Reputable bibliographies, booklists by recognized authorities, and the advice of competent individuals and/or entities in specific subject fields also are used. In addition, selection is based in part on the professional knowledge and judgment of the library staff, which is acquainted with the strengths and weaknesses of the existing collection and with community needs and interests. Suggestions from library users also are considered.

### **Section 4: Criteria for selection**

The selection of books and other library materials (including print, nonprint, and electronic), whether acquired by purchase or gift, will be based on the following criteria: 1. The appropriateness of material in relation to the needs and interests of the library users and of the community as a whole.

2. The value of the material for educational, informational, cultural, and recreational purposes.
3. The timeliness of the information.
4. The contribution of the material toward strengthening the existing collection and/or expanding its scope.
5. The accuracy, authoritativeness, and competence of the presentation.
6. Requests and suggestions from individuals to which the above criteria can be applied.
7. The permanent value of the material based on literary or scholarly excellence and

other inherent qualities, considered without regard to demand.

#### 8. Budgetary limitations

It is the goal of the library to build a balanced collection characterized by materials of current popular interest as well as materials of permanent worth. While popular demand is a significant basis for selection, many great works of scholarship and literature are keystones of modern knowledge and culture but may not be high demand items. It is the library's policy to select, along with popular demand items, materials of permanent value, regardless of whether or not they will be widely used.

The purchase of multiple copies of materials will be based on community needs and interests, the importance of an item, and budget considerations. Multiple copies cannot be purchased in response to student demands which the schools should properly be expected to meet.

It is not the library's policy automatically to replace every item when lost or worn out. Need for replacement is weighed in relation to the number of duplicate copies already owned in the region; existence of adequate coverage in the subject field; other similar materials in the collection or available for purchase; and the demand for the specific author, title, or subject.

#### **Media (DVDs, CDs and Playaways)**

To meet the needs of the community by providing informational and recreational materials in non-print format such as DVDs, audiobooks, and a limited number of music CDs. Special selection criteria in both the adult and children's collections include cost and space considerations, contributions to a balance and range of information, as well as emphasis on instructional, educational, and informational topics. Audiobook purchases will enhance the print collection.

The film collection is intended to be supplementary and emphasizes titles which are out of the mainstream of commercial video. Critically well-reviewed films which also meet one or more of several criteria are considered. The criteria may include historical significance, films from other countries or by independent filmmakers, films with regional or local interest, biographical films, and film versions of literary works. The entertainment collection does not include most current feature films which are widely available in commercial outlets. Some current mainstream films may be selected if they reflect the library's goals.

#### **Electronic Information Access**

Within budgetary and legal constraints: Electronic resources (Databases) are acquired to respond to the information needs of customers of all ages. This collection includes magazine and journal indexing with full text access, electronic books (e-books), and databases. Electronic resources are selected to support the informational needs of all ages with special emphasis on homework support. Databases enable access to informational resources from remote locations and during hours when libraries are not open. When feasible, databases are preferred format for reference material because of the potential for access by multiple customers in many locations.

## **Section 5: Materials for Children and Young Adults**

The children's collection contains material most suited to the abilities and interests of library users from preschool through grade 6, while young adult materials are those most suited to the abilities and interests of library users from grade 7 through grade 12.

Both children's and young adult materials will be selected with the same care and judgment and following the same criteria as adult materials.

Providing textbooks is the responsibility of the schools. Instead, the library will provide supplementary materials to enrich the resources available to students and teachers through the educational system. Selection of materials for children and young adults should not be made to duplicate school texts but rather should consider the usefulness of the items for general library purposes. Textbooks may be considered for purchase if such items constitute the best available source of information on a subject.

It is the library's policy to allow children and young adults free access to the adult collection for the use of advanced materials for personal and educational enrichment.

The library recognizes and accepts the role of the parent or legal guardian in supervising the reading material of the child. The library staff cannot be expected to know the content of every item in the library collection or to supervise the reading of every young person who uses the library. The staff is not in a position to judge parental concern and control of reading materials for children.

Selection of materials for the community as a whole cannot be inhibited by the possibility that specific items of an advanced nature may come into the possession of children.

## **Section 6: Withdrawals**

An up-to-date, attractive, and reliable collection can be maintained only by purchasing, retaining, and replacing useful materials, and by removing, on a systematic and continuous basis, those items that are damaged, outdated, inaccurate, duplicating, no longer in demand, and/or otherwise no longer useful.

It is the library's policy that the collection should be evaluated by authorized and qualified staff on a systematic and on-going basis to identify materials appropriate to withdraw.

## **Section 7: Gifts of Materials**

The library accepts gifts of materials without commitment as to final disposition. In determining whether a gift item is to be added to the collection, the same standards are applied as those outlined for the selection of items for purchase. The library assumes unconditional ownership of all materials donated. Items in poor physical condition or written in will not be kept. Duplicate copies of items already in the collection will be added only if needed. Gift materials will not be

accepted with restrictions or conditions that necessitate special housing, processing, or treatment. The only form of donor or memorial identification will be a gift plate.

The library cannot give a dollar valuation for gifts or materials, but it will provide the donor with a statement verifying the number and type of materials donated and accepted, upon request.

### **Section 8: Balance and Neutrality**

The library has a responsibility to provide books and other materials presenting several diverse points of view concerning the problems and issues of our time. It must be understood clearly, therefore, that ownership of library materials does not in any way constitute an endorsement by the library of the ideas or viewpoints expressed within those materials.

Selection of library materials are not made on the basis of any anticipated approval or disapproval by specific individuals or groups, but solely on the merits of the works in relation to building the collection and serving the needs and interests of library users and the community as a whole. While the library is aware that one or more persons may take issue with the selection of specific items, the library does not have to remove from the collection items purchased in accordance with the criteria specified above. Nor will materials be marked in such a way as to indicate approval or disapproval. Items are not separated from the general collection except for the purposes of protecting them from damage or theft.

### **Section 9: Requests for Reconsideration of Materials**

A library user who wishes to object to the presence of a particular item in the collection will be asked to state his/her complaint in writing on forms provided by the library. After reviewing the complaint, the Library Director will present the complaint to the Library Board of Trustees, together with his/her recommendation. The Library Board then will review the complaint and the recommendation and will authorize the Library Director to issue a timely and final response to the user.

### **Section 10: Authority**

This Materials Selection Policy supersedes and takes precedence over any selection policy previously adopted by the Regional Library Board of Trustees.

*Adopted June 5, 2007*

*Arkansas River Valley Regional Library Board*

*-- Amended and Approved December 21, 2020*