
MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Hartland Public Library's Materials Selection Policy is to guide library staff in selecting materials which will best serve our community and to inform the public about the principles upon which these selections are made. While a policy cannot replace the judgment of library staff, stating goals and indicating boundaries will assist them in choosing from the vast array of available materials.

DEFINITION

"Selection" refers to the decision that must be made to either add material(s) to the collection or retain material(s) already in the collection.

"Library Materials" and other synonyms that may appear in this policy have the widest possible meaning. All forms of contemporary recorded mass communication from the traditional printed formats to the latest development in non-print media are therefore included in this definition.

GOALS

The primary goals of materials selection are:

- To maintain a well-balanced and broad collection of materials for information, reference, and research.
- To support the democratic process by providing materials for the education and enlightenment of the community.
- To provide recreational and cultural resources.

RESPONSIBILITY

Responsibility for the initial selection of books and other materials lies with the Library Director or with library staff members designated by the Library Director. These designated staff members are responsible for the development of their assigned areas. Other staff members and library users may recommend materials for consideration; however, there is no guarantee that staff members will add materials based on these recommendations. The ultimate responsibility for selection rests with the Library Director, operating within the framework of policies adopted by the Library Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees endorses the presence of all current library materials and, as long as library staff has selected materials within the framework of this policy, all materials will be considered as selected by the board. Selection of a title does not indicate an endorsement of that material and the library recognizes that some materials may be controversial and offend some library users.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR SELECTION

- Selection is based on the merits of a work in relation to the needs, interests, and demands of the greater Hartland community. Basic to this policy are the "Library Bill of Rights" and the "Freedom to Read Statement" as adopted by the American Library Association, both of which this library subscribes to. Copies of these two documents are appended to this policy.

- Responsibility for the reading of children rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection should not be inhibited by the possibility that some books may inadvertently come into the possession of children.
- Controversial materials are not automatically rejected. Selection is made on the basis of whether the item presents life in its true proportions, whether characters and situations are realistically presented, whether the item has literary or artistic merit, and whether the item is representative of a current trend or genre.
- In keeping with its general and local information goal, the library will provide circulating, reference, and research material for the general public and students. Special collections (genealogy, local history, career information, municipal documents, etc.) will be developed and maintained when indicated by community interest.

SPECIFIC PRINCIPLES FOR SELECTION

The following principles will be taken into consideration when selecting items to be added to the collection:

- Contemporary significance or permanent value.
- Accuracy of content.
- Authority of the author or producer.
- Relation of the work to the existing collection.
- Price, format, and ease of use. However, format will not be used as a valid reason for exclusion of materials which otherwise meet the library's selection criteria.
- Scarcity of information in the subject area.
- Availability of material elsewhere in the community. Holdings of other libraries in the area are considered in developing the library's collection. Materials, particularly those of a highly technical nature, may be borrowed from area libraries through inter-library loan.
- Patron requests.
- Popular demand (such as best-seller lists).
- Duplication of materials already in the collection. Purchase of additional copies of material should be governed by intrinsic or historical value and need. Paperbacks or leased books may be used to satisfy a temporary heavy demand.
- Important human or social insight.
- Works which represent current ideas, mores, events, genre, or trends.
- Role of literary reviews: While efforts are to be made to purchase items which have been reviewed in standard library and book trade resources, from time-to-time materials may be purchased from publishers' catalogs, publishers' remainders, etc.
- Works which are deemed important because of artistic or literary presentation or merit.

POLICIES FOR SELECTION OF SPECIFIC TYPES OF MATERIALS

The policies and procedures outlined elsewhere in the policy manual for all aspects of collection development, including selection criteria, selection responsibility, gifts and donations, weeding, replacement, and requests for reconsideration will be followed for all library materials, regardless of format or type.

LIBRARY INITIATED PROGRAMS

Library initiated programming is a library resource that provides information, education, and/or recreation to library users. Library initiated programming utilizes library staff, books, library and community resources, resource people, displays, and media presentations.

Selection of library program topics, speakers, courses, classes, and resources materials should be made by library staff on the basis of the interests and needs of library users and the community. Library programming should not exclude topics, books, speakers, media and other resources because they might be controversial.

GIFTS

A gift for the library collection may consist of materials or funds for the purchase of materials. Funds may be given for acquiring materials recommended by the library staff or for the purchase of specific items suggested by the donor. The library encourages gifts not earmarked for specific items in order to permit the most flexible use of the donation for the enrichment of the collection. (Note: Donations are considered 'gifts' through this policy.)

Gift additions must meet the same selection criteria as purchased materials. In some cases, titles are received or purchased which could not have been acquired from library funds because of budget limitations.

If gifts of marginal value are offered, processing costs and use of shelf space are considered before the gift can be accepted. Any gift accepted by the library is subject to the following conditions:

- The library retains unconditional ownership of the gift.
- The library makes the final decision on its own use or other disposition of the gift.
- The library reserves the right to decide the conditions of display, housing, and access to the materials.
- The library will provide for no special conditions other than a memorial or a gift book plate or plaque.

Any offers of substantial monetary gifts or offers of equipment, art objects, special collections, etc. should be referred to the Library Director. Such offers will be accepted/rejected based on considerations of need, appropriateness, maintenance, precedence, etc. Any gift will be subject to the same conditions of acceptance as outlined above.

The library will not affix a value for income tax purposes to any gift accepted; rather this is the responsibility of the donor. The library will, however, upon request acknowledge the gift by letter, and specify the type and quantity of the gift for the donor's records.

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Special collections, such as the collection of historical material known as the Hartland History Collection, are considered gifts to the Hartland Public Library and as such will remain, in total, a permanent part of the library's holdings.

REPLACEMENT

A replacement is an item purchased to take the place of an identical title previously in the collection, the last copy of which has been withdrawn because of loss, damage, or wear.

It is the library's policy not to automatically replace all books withdrawn. The need for replacement in each case is judged by two factors: (1) existence of adequate coverage in the item's field by similar material, especially if this material is more recent; and (2) demand for the specific title.

BINDING AND MENDING

Keeping materials in good physical condition is essential. Decisions must be made continuously on how to handle worn books - whether to mend, bind, or withdraw them. Each decision is based on the actual condition of the book, current validity of its contents, availability for re-order, and cost of binding versus replacement. Replacement is preferable to binding if costs are comparable. Except in special cases, mending is done only when the need for it is detected early. In general, little attempt is made to mend non-accessioned materials, e.g. pamphlets, circulating duplicates of magazines, paperbacks, etc.

WEEDING

Weeding is defined as systematically removing materials from the collection.

The library collection will be continuously weeded in a systematic manner to ensure that the items held are of the highest possible quality and utility.

Once removed from the library's collection, items weeded will be offered to the Friends of the Hartland Library for their book sale or donated to local charities. If neither the Friends nor local charities will receive the materials, the library reserves the right to recycle said materials appropriately and efficiently.

Some of the factors to be considered in weeding include:

- Balance of collection.
- Poor physical condition.
- Currency of information.
- Frequency of use/circulation.
- If an item has been superseded by a new edition or better works on a subject have been made available.

APPENDIX

[Library Bill of Rights](#)

[Freedom to Read Statement](#)

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