



## Materials Selection Policy

### Purpose

The mission of the Dwight Foster Public Library as adopted by the Library Board of Trustees is as follows:

**The mission of the Dwight Foster Public Library is to help people achieve their full potential by being a leading resource for information, education, culture, and recreation.**

To fulfill that mission, the Dwight Foster Public Library will provide all area residents ready access to a broad collection of materials in a variety of formats that record our knowledge, ideas, and culture within the limitations of space and budget. It is the responsibility of the Library to satisfy the diverse education, information, and entertainment needs of its library patrons through the selection, acquisition, organization, and preservation of library materials and to provide skilled guidance in their use. The Library is directed in this process by the following objectives:

- To assemble, preserve, and administer, in organized collections, books and related educational, recreational, and cultural materials, both print and non-print, in order to promote, through guidance and stimulation, the communication of ideas, an enlightened citizenship, and enriched personal lives;
- To serve the community as a center of reliable information in print, non-print, and electronic formats;
- To facilitate continuing education, both formal and informal, for all ages;
- To seek to continually identify community needs, to provide programs of service and materials to meet such needs, and to cooperate with other organizations, agencies, and institutions which can provide programs or services or materials to meet community needs;
- To encourage the development of reading skills;
- To provide materials for entertainment, enrichment, and recreation purposes as well as education, information, and research;
- To stimulate thoughtful participation in the life of the family, the community, the country, and the world.

### Selection of Materials

The Dwight Foster Public Library Board of Trustees shall delegate to the Director the authority and responsibility for selection of all print and non-print materials. Responsibilities for actual selection shall rest with appropriate trained personnel who discharge this obligation consistent with the Library Board's adopted selection criteria.

Involved in the choice of materials are the experience and knowledge of those staff members selecting materials, their familiarity with the community, its needs and demands, other library resources, the existing collection, other libraries' collections, the Library's materials budget, and the physical limitations of the library building.

Materials will be judged on the basis of the content and style of the work as a whole, not by selected or random passages or scenes which in themselves may be offensive.

Reviews in professional journals are used in the selection process and are sought whenever possible. However, the lack of a review or an unfavorable review shall not preclude the Library's acquisition of a title. If the title is in demand or is determined to fill a particular need of the Library, it may be acquired.

In addition to reviews, the Library uses standard lists of basic works, visual inspection, publisher's catalogs, and bibliographies. At times, the library staff may consult subject area specialists to obtain advice on building certain subjects or areas of the collection.

Some factors influencing selection of an item include (but are not limited to): factual accuracy and reliability of information, timeliness, current usefulness, significance of the subject, popular interest, permanent value, relevance to the existing collection, qualifications of author or illustrator, style and readability, reputation of the publisher, arrangement of the material, format and physical qualities, and price.

Non-book materials are an integral part of the Library's holdings; these include but are not limited to: periodicals, videos, audios, and access to electronic information. The selection of non-book materials is governed by the same criteria which apply to books. In addition, special consideration is given to the technical quality of non-print materials (e.g. sound quality in recording, search engine in electronic information, color reproduction in videos, etc.).

Demand is a valid factor in material selection. Materials selected by these criteria will be of popular interest and in high demand or of significant current interest, not always of enduring value. An item in heavy demand may be duplicated if prolonged use is anticipated; however, the Dwight Foster Public Library will not duplicate heavily at the expense of a first copy of important though less-called-for material needed in the permanent collection.

The Library recognizes its responsibility to have available a representative selection of materials on subjects of interest to its users. No library material shall be excluded because of the race, nationality, or political or social view of the author.

The Library takes no sides on public issues and does not attempt to promote any beliefs or points of view, nor does it endorse the opinions expressed in the materials held. The

Library recognizes its responsibility to provide various points of view, within the limitations of space, budget, and availability, to enable people to make their own decisions.

Suppliers for library materials will be at the discretion of the Library Director and trained staff. Speed, pricing structure, availability, and service will all be considerations.

### **Access**

The Library assures free access to its holdings for all patrons who are free to select or reject for themselves any item in the collection. Individual or group prejudice about a particular item or type of materials in the collection may not preclude its use by others.

Library materials will not be sequestered except for the purpose of protection from theft or damage.

Children are not limited to the juvenile collection, although the juvenile collection is kept together to facilitate use. Responsibility for a child's reading or viewing must rest with the parent or guardian of the child, not with the Library. In this, librarians can be important allies to the family. Professional members of the library staff are trained to help all patrons identify and seek materials which are appropriate to their expressed needs and viewpoints. The collection is designed to serve the whole community.

### **The Library and the Family**

Most parents acknowledge and vigorously defend their own right and responsibility to guide their own children's moral development. The Library supports the family in this.

However, some people demand that the library collection exclude difficult or controversial materials from which they wish to shield their own (or somebody else's) children.

It is precisely at the point that a child encounters difficult or disturbing information—whether in daily life or in a book, video, etc. that the parent must do his or her part.

That the task may occasionally seem overwhelming begs the issue. To sanitize a library collection to avoid the possibility of such moments dodges the point.

Through library materials, some subjects can be approached with children in a context which will aid the parents in preparing the child for adulthood. The timing of such encounters as a child grows up is a serious matter. It is not entirely controllable. Nevertheless, guidance in these matters is the parents' responsibility.

### **Challenged Materials**

The Dwight Foster Public Library Board of Trustees subscribes in principle to the statements on library philosophy as expressed by the American Library Association in the "Library Bill of Rights" and the "Freedom to Read Statement."

When a patron objects to a particular selection, the objections shall be made in writing and the following procedures will be adhered to in processing the complaint:

1. A concerned patron may request a Reconsideration of Library Materials form. The objecting patron must be a resident of the City of Fort Atkinson or a non-librariated area of Jefferson County. Residents' taxes from these areas pay for the materials held by the Library; therefore, only residents may request that a material be reconsidered. Further, the objecting patron must have an active library account at the Dwight Foster Public Library.
2. The patron reads Dwight Foster Public Library's "Materials Selection Policy" and the American Library Association's "Library Bill of Rights" and "Freedom to Read Statement."
3. The patron completes the Reconsideration of Library Materials form and returns the form to the Library Director. The Library Director informs the Board at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting that a challenge has been received.
4. The Library Director, with appropriate library staff, will review the reconsideration form and the material in question to consider whether its possession follows the criteria stated in the "Materials Selection Policy."
5. The Library Director will make a determination about the item. The Library Director will communicate this determination in writing to the patron who requested the reconsideration stating the reasons for the decision. The Library Director will include the determination in the Library Board's next regular meeting packet.
6. If the individual is not satisfied with the decision, a written appeal may be submitted within 30 days to the Library Board of Trustees.
7. Following a 45-day period during which the Library Board of Trustees members should study the item in question, the Library Director will present the reconsideration request and written appeal to the Library Board of Trustees at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The patron requesting the reconsideration will be invited to attend the board meeting at which the material and the request will be discussed.
8. The Library Board of Trustees will determine whether the request for reconsideration has been handled in accordance with Dwight Foster Public Library's policies.
9. The patron requesting the evaluation will be notified in writing of the Library Board of Trustees' decision.
10. If a material has been reconsidered for the collection, the Library Director and Library Board of Trustees will not review it again for 24 months.

### **Collection Maintenance and Deselection**

The Library keeps its collection vital and useful by retaining or replacing essential material and removing on a systematic and continuous basis those materials which are worn, outdated, of little historical significance, or no longer in demand. Discarded items may be given to other libraries or organizations but are usually given to the Friends of the Dwight Foster Public Library. These discarded items are then sold by and for the benefit of the Friends of the Dwight Foster Public Library. Items unsuitable for the Friends of the Library book sale, items which have not sold after a period of time, and other discarded items may be disposed of.

## **Gifts**

The Library will encourage and gratefully accept gifts with the understanding that gifts of materials will be added to the collection only if they meet the same standards required of purchased materials. Gift materials are considered with the explicit understanding that such factors as currency, duplication, lack of community interest, processing costs, unsuitability for library use, or inadequate shelf space may prevent their addition to the collection. Gift materials not meeting the same standard as purchased materials may be given to other organizations, sold, recycled, or discarded.

A letter for tax purposes will be given to the donor if requested at the time the donation is made acknowledging receipt of the gift but specifying no value.

Whenever a gift is no longer needed, it will be disposed of in the same manner as material purchased.

All gift items become the Library's property from the time of the receipt until the time of disposal.

## **Special Collections**

The Library assumes the responsibility for acquiring and maintaining certain materials of local historical interest.

Works authored by Lorine Niedecker, Fort Atkinson poet, will be acquired and maintained for historical interest. Works written about Lorine Niedecker will also be acquired for the collection.

Newbery and Caldecott Medal books will be acquired for and maintained in the Waterman Memorial Collection.

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