

## **POLICY ON SELECTION OF MATERIALS**

The Beaumont Library District maintains a wide range of free library services for all residents of the District. The core of these services is the collection of materials which fulfills the educational, cultural, informational and recreational needs of a diverse community. When the selection of library materials to fill these needs is successfully realized, the community has access to a balanced expression of thoughts and perspectives, an essential concept in a society based on democratic values.

The purpose of the Beaumont Library District Materials Selection Policy is to provide accountability guidelines for selection in pursuing this goal of balanced collection development.

Such a policy cannot be definitive for all time. As the District area grows and the needs of its citizens change, the policy will be reviewed and revised by the staff and the Library Board to reflect the continuing changes in accessibility of enormous amounts of information and the increasing sophistication of the library's members.

### **OBJECTIVES**

The primary objectives of materials selection shall be to collect materials of contemporary significance and of permanent value. The library will always be guided by a sense of responsibility to both the present and the future in adding materials which will enrich the collections and maintain an overall balance. The library also recognizes an immediate duty to make available materials for enlightenment and recreation, even though such materials may not have enduring interest or value.

By adopting this policy, the Beaumont District Library affirms its belief in the principles of the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read and Freedom to View Statements as adopted by the American Library Association. (See Section Two) Further, the Library acknowledges its responsibility to the community it serves in providing library materials which present all points of view and its obligation to defend its selections against arbitrary removal from the collection.

### **RESPONSIBILITY FOR MATERIALS SELECTION**

Final responsibility for materials selections lies with the Library Director working within the goals and objectives as approved by the Library Board of Trustees. However, the Librarian will delegate to members of the staff authority to interpret and guide the application of the policy in making day-to-day selections. Input from other staff members and from the public will be received and evaluated according to these guidelines. Unusual problems will be referred to the Library Director for resolution.

All staff members selecting library materials will be expected to keep the objectives in mind and apply their professional knowledge and experience in making decisions. On no account should personal prejudice or bias influence the selection or non-selection of library materials. The inclusion of materials within the collection does not connote Library approval or advocacy of the ideas which the material contains.

### **USE OF THE LIBRARY'S MATERIALS**

The Library recognizes that some library materials may be construed by some members as offensive or controversial in nature and that any given item may offend some members. Selections will be made solely on the merits of the work in relation to the building of the collection and to serving the interests of members and not on the basis of any anticipated approval or disapproval.

Community members who wish to protest the suitability of a title in the collection may do so by writing to the Library Director and completing a Material Complaint Form. The Librarian, the staff, and, if necessary, the Library Board, will determine whether or not the material in question violates any principles of the current Materials Selection Policy.

Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents, and no catalogued materials will be sequestered, except for the express purpose of protecting it from injury or theft.

Responsibility for the reading and viewing of children rests with their parents and legal guardians. It is not the responsibility or function of librarians to police the use of materials or prevent their use by children or young adults. Selection will not be inhibited by the possibility that children may inadvertently come into the possession of books or other materials which their parents consider inappropriate.

The library will provide the necessary equipment for adequate use of its resources in a desirable environment. The Librarian may impose time limits upon the use of that equipment, should usage warrant such restrictions.

The library shall make every effort to provide materials for physically handicapped persons by acquiring such items as large-print books, closed captioned films, and talking books.

### **AUTHORITY OF POLICY**

This policy as accepted supersedes any previous policies in force. Materials ordered in accordance with the criteria as established by this policy shall be deemed suitable for inclusion in the Beaumont Library District collection and shall not be removed except as already described.

## DISPENSATION OF POLICY

A copy of this policy shall be available for public perusal at any library facility.

## GUIDELINES FOR SELECTION OF MATERIALS

The Library takes into consideration the purposes and resources of other libraries in the District area (such as colleges, schools; and specialized libraries) and shall not needlessly duplicate functions and materials.

The Library does not attempt to acquire textbooks or other curriculum-related materials except as such materials also serve the general public.

Legal and medical works will be acquired only to the extent that they are useful to the layman.

The library acknowledges a particular interest in local and State history; therefore, it will seek to acquire materials of that nature even though such materials may not meet the standards of selection in other respects. However, the Library is under no obligation to add to its collection everything produced on local or State history if it does not seem in the public interest to do so.

Because the Library serves a public embracing a wide range of ages, educational backgrounds and reading skills it will always seek to select materials of varying complexity.

In selecting materials for its collections, the Library will pay due regard to the special, commercial, industrial, cultural and civic enterprises of the community.

Material of a highly specialized nature or of only occasional demand shall be met by interlibrary loan through affiliation with the Inland Library System.

Multiple copies of items needed for class assignments will not be purchased.

Although reference books generally will not circulate, special consideration will be given to the purchase of reference books of a popular nature for inclusion in the circulating collection.

Judgement of fiction is made on the total item, rather than on parts that might in themselves be considered objectionable.

Multiple copies of items are purchased in relation to demand.

Standard titles are replaced if they are lost or damaged.

## SELECTION OF BOOKS

The following criteria are taken into consideration for the selection of nonfiction:

- Is the author qualified (by profession, education, amount of research done, etc.) to write in a particular subject field?
- Does the material cover the scope of the subject to a degree appropriate to the intended audience?
- Does the author have an appropriate command of language and present the material in a way that can be understood by the audience for which it is intended?
- Is the information timely and up to date?
- Is the information presented in a clear, logical sequence with an arrangement (table of contents, index) appropriate to the subject?
- Is the physical quality of the book adequate (binding, size of print, illustrations, margins) for clear explication of the text?
- Is the price reasonable in relation to the above criteria?
- Is the subject of the book appropriate to the existing collection and the interests of the community?
- Does the book significantly contribute to the expansion of knowledge in a particular subject or make specialized knowledge accessible to the nonspecialist?

The following criteria are taken into consideration for the selection of fiction:

- Is the style of the book suitable for the themes and characters portrayed (mood, dialog, readability?)
- Are the characters believably developed?
- Is the plot believable, well-constructed, showing originality and imagination?
- Is the book significant, either in terms of broad appeal or because it is one of exceptional merit, offering inspiration or pleasure to the reader?
- Is the book appropriate to the collection, i.e., mystery, western, fantasy, science fiction, romance?

-Are the physical qualities of the book adequate (readable print, good margins, suitable illustrations, good binding)?

-Is the price reasonable in relation to the above criteria?

### **MATERIALS OTHER THAN BOOKS**

The same philosophy and standards of selection which apply to books apply to the selection of materials other than books. Need, demand, and use are factors to be considered.

#### **PERIODICALS**

-Periodicals are purchased to supplement the collections, provide recreational reading, provide material not yet available in book form, furnish professional reading for the staff, and to aid in materials selection

-Periodicals selected are those which are considered authoritative and objective, indexed in the standard periodical indexes, those of local interest, those frequently in demand.

-Titles shall be reviewed on an annual basis for retention or cancellation and new titles considered at that time.

-Gift periodicals must be approved by the Library Director. Records will be kept identifying title, donor, length of subscription, dispensation, etc. Multiple titles will not be accepted from a single organization. Display and retention of back issues of gift periodicals shall be dependent on space available. Any decision in regard to a gift periodical may be reversed at a later date, if the situation calls for it. Records will be kept of any gift periodical not accepted, along with a sample copy, if possible.

#### **NEWSPAPERS**

-The Press Enterprise, Record Gazette, and the Los Angeles Times are purchased currently and are available for limited back issues. Assessment of the collection is provided on an annual basis and adjustments are made within budgetary guidelines.

#### **GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS**

- Certain government documents which are deemed necessary in a public library are added to our collection. Free materials available through Congress and the Senate are also sought when appropriate.

#### **AUDIOVISUAL MATERIALS**

- Factors important in the selection of audiovisual materials include: validity and significance of content, accuracy of presentation, aesthetic and technical quality,

relationship of the material to the collection, interest in the subject matter and generally all criteria used in selecting print materials. Gift materials will be treated in the same manner as gift books.

### **MAPS**

- Accuracy, print and readability are considered. All types of maps are eligible for the collections - political, geographical, topographical, pictorial, historical, geological, demographic, and road.

### **PAPERBACKS**

-The same standards apply to paperbacks as to other print materials.

-Paperbacks in trade or mass market editions are bought for the following reasons: Title is out of print or unobtainable in other formats, the title has not appeared in another edition, or is in heavy demand for temporary current interest or information. The price in relation to anticipated demand is more reasonable than for a hardback edition.

### **DATABASES**

- The library will contract with database vendors as need and budget warrant. The library will continue to evaluate these services to determine their usefulness and whether print resources can be eliminated if automated searching is provided.

## **TECHNIQUES AND SELECTION AIDS**

Standard selection aids for current fiction and non-fiction include Library Journal, Publisher's Weekly, School Library Journal, Booklist, and NoveList. These are but a few of the sources used. Fiction and Nonfiction Core Collections are all consulted for retrospective ordering and identification of materials requiring withdrawal.

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