

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT/MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY

- I. Purpose of Policy – The purpose of the Collection Development/Materials Selection Policy is to aid the library staff in the selection of library materials. The policy explains to the public the criteria upon which materials are selected and maintained.

- II. Mission Statement – The Bristol Public Library System is committed to providing the community with a friendly and knowledgeable atmosphere where educational, informational, recreational, cultural and professional materials and services can be found in a variety of formats. An emphasis is placed on encouraging the use of the library by persons of all ages in order to stimulate lifelong learning and an appreciation for reading, and to provide a resource center for ideas and information for the entire community.

- III. Intellectual Freedom – The Board of Library Directors has endorsed the Library Bill of Rights, The Freedom to Read, The Freedom to View statements of the American Library Association, and The Public Library: Democracy’s Resource. The appendix of this policy contains copies of these documents.

- IV. General Criteria for Selection
 - A. Popular Demand
 1. Multiple Copies – The library purchases or leases copies of new books based on reviews, author’s reputation and local popularity. Additional copies of popular books are purchased or leased depending on demand and budgetary resources.
 - B. Request for Purchase – The public may request for purchase library materials that are not in the library’s collection. If the items meet established criteria in this document, and there are adequate funds, the materials will be purchased.
 - C. Cost –The cost of items must be taken into consideration against the yearly budget.
 - D. Format – The Bristol Public Library System acquires materials in a variety of formats. As new technologies are developed, other formats may be added to the collection.
 - E. Textbooks – Textbooks will be purchased only when they provide the best coverage of a subject and are useful to the general public—not to support a specific curriculum.
 - F. Curriculum Related Materials – The library will support area educational facilities by having materials that support their respective curricula in a general manner.
 - G. American With Disabilities Act (ADA) – In compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), the library provides the following materials: large print books, books-on-CD, and ADA compliant workstations. If the items meet established criteria in this document, and there are adequate funds, the materials will be purchased.
 - H. Born digital items are those materials created in a digital format. They are distinct from analog items that are subsequently digitized, such as paper manuscripts or photographs. In order to accept born digital items, the Library addresses: 1. Copyright and licensing 2. Redaction of personally identifiable information 3. Any restrictions on use or circulation 4. Maintenance and evolution of accepted formats.

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT RESPONSIBILITY

Under the authority of the Library Board of Trustees, the Director is ultimately responsible for collection development. The Director, in turn, delegates the authority for individual selection to designated professional staff in the appropriate departments.

SELECTION, MAINTENANCE, AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

Selection Criteria

Library staff utilize professional judgment in making collection development decisions, including decisions about choosing titles, identifying quantities for purchase, and selecting locations for materials.

Selection Sources

Sources for selection decisions encompass, but are not limited to, published reviews from standard review sources, publisher/vendor catalogs and advertisements, professional and trade bibliographies, and customer requests and recommendations.

Gifts

The Library accepts gifts of materials for the collection using the same selection criteria that are applied to purchased materials. Decisions regarding the final disposition of gifts are the responsibility of designated professional staff using the following guidelines:

- The Library retains unconditional ownership of the gift. Evaluating staff will determine the conditions of display, housing, location and access to the material.
- Not all gifts are added to the collection. These gifts may be given to the Friends of the Public Library for public sale, or may be disposed of through other means determined by the Library.
- The Library does not place a value on gifts, or provide appraisals for any purpose.
- The Library is pleased to accept monetary gifts intended for the purchase of library materials when the donors' intentions for the gifts and the library's collection development objectives are consistent with the policy.

Intellectual Freedom

The Library is committed to free and open access to its collections and to connecting people with the world of ideas, information and materials they wish to explore in a friendly, nonjudgmental manner.

To this end, the Library strives to offer a balanced collection that represents the needs of our diverse community. Inclusion of an item in the collection does not mean that the Library endorses any theory or statement contained in those materials and resources.

Decisions about what materials are suitable for particular children or teenagers should be made by the people who know them best - their parents or guardians. Selection of materials for adults is not constrained by possible exposure to children or teenagers.

Reconsideration of Library Materials

The library recognizes that some materials may offend some patrons. Selections will not be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the work in relation to the building of the collections and to serving the interests of library patrons. Responsibility for the reading, viewing, and listening of materials by children and teens rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection of adult materials will not be inhibited by the possibility that books may inadvertently come into the possession of children. Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents and no materials will be removed from the open shelves except for the express

purpose of storage or protecting it from mutilation or theft. The selection of any material is not a library endorsement of the viewpoint expressed.

When a patron makes a formal complaint to challenge library materials, the following procedure shall be in effect:

1. The patron is asked to complete a written report.
2. The material in question remains in circulation until such time as it is carefully reviewed by both the Library staff, and the Policy Committee of the Library Board, and the Corporation Counsel of the City of Bristol as needed until the issue is resolved.
3. The Policy Committee of the Library Board makes a report of its findings and recommendations to the Board of Library Directors; the Board then votes on the recommendation of the Policy Committee.
4. The Director notifies the patron making the complaint via letter of the findings of the Policy Committee of the Library Board and the final disposition of the Board of Library Directors regarding the challenge.

Maintenance and Evaluation

Library staff are responsible for the deselection of physical materials. Materials are deselected monthly to make room for incoming items, and keep the collection usable. Reports are run to identify duplicate copies, accuracy of content, community need, patron demand for a specific title or subject and the condition of the available materials. Once items are identified for possible deselection, they are further evaluated by library staff. Further evaluation considers things like: the enduring nature of the material, adequate coverage of the field, and the accessibility of the item and/or the subjects.

If it is determined that an item needs to be weeded, it will be properly deleted from the catalog and all identifying library marks removed. Materials will be recycled or discarded. The library will never sell or gift materials from its current or past collections to patrons. Limits may be placed on physical discards every month.

The Technical Services Department of the Library permanently discards the records of Bristol items that are no longer available in our holdings. The catalog is evaluated monthly to ensure that it accurately reflects what is available. Non-physical discards are monitored, and removal takes place once it has been established that they are no longer a part of the collection. Monthly limits are enforced for these deletions.

The selection of materials for discarding is based on the CREW Method (Continuous Review, Evaluation, and Weeding) and will be followed where applicable.

Revised 9/11/2023