

## MATERIAL SELECTION POLICY

### **A. General Statement:**

The library shall build a collection of print and non-print material to achieve library objectives and to meet the expressed and anticipated needs of the community. This material may include: books, periodicals, newspapers, and AV materials.

The library shall strive to provide materials representing a variety of viewpoints on a range of subjects. The collection shall contain materials which have been selected for the library on the basis of value, significance of the subject, and their contribution to the library's selected roles.

The selection of any material for the Library's collection does not constitute an endorsement of its contents. The Library recognizes that many materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some users. Decisions are not made on the basis of any anticipated approval or disapproval, but on the merits of the work in relation to the building of the collection and to serving the interests of users.

Responsibility for children's use of library materials rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection decisions are not influenced by the possibility that material may be accessible to use by children.

### **B. Responsibility For Selection:**

The responsibility for selection library materials rests with the library director, who will be operating within the framework of policies and objectives determined the Marshall Library Board.

### **C. Criteria For Selection:**

To build a collection of merit and significance, materials should be measured by objective guidelines. While it is desirable for the library director to personally review materials, it is not practical or possible in the majority of cases to do so. Selection aids such as publisher's lists, current best seller lists, special bibliographies, patron requests and reviewing journals will be used. All acquisitions, whether purchased or donated, are considered in terms of the standards listed below. An item need not meet all the criteria in order to be acceptable.

1. Authoritativeness
2. Suitability of subject and style for intended audience.
3. Present and potential relevance to community needs.
4. Relation to existing library materials.
5. Reputation and/or significance of author.
6. Attention of critics, reviewers and the public.
7. Price.
8. Availability of materials elsewhere in the area.
9. Patron demand.

## Books on Special Subjects

1. Materials on controversial issues and political theories should represent a particular point of view and a sincere effort made to select materials presenting contrasting points of view.
2. Religious materials are chosen to explain rather than to convince and are selected to represent the field as widely as possible.
3. In literary works of established quality, the use of profanity or the treatment of sex is not an adequate reason for eliminating the material.
4. Materials on sex education, physiology, physical maturation or personal hygiene should be accurate and in good taste. Once purchased they will be kept on open shelves.
5. Medical and law books should be of the general type. Technical books on these subjects should not be purchased.
6. Text books should not be purchased unless they have very good coverage on a subject difficult to find elsewhere.

## **D. Guidelines for Maintenance of Collection:**

1. Duplication
  - a. Given limited resources, the library will avoid duplication of materials.
  - b. The library will not provide multiple copies for classroom use, except as is possible through interlibrary loan.
2. Replacement
  - a. The library will not automatically replace books withdrawn because of loss, damage, or wear. Replacement will depend upon demand for a specific title and the extent of adequate coverage in the particular subject area.
3. Gifts
  - a. The library retains the right to make the most advantageous use of materials it accepts. Gifts of books and other materials are accepted without commitment as to final disposition and with the understanding that they will not necessarily be added to the library collection. Donations of books and other materials are governed by the gift policy.
4. Mending, Rebinding & Weeding
  - a. Keeping all library materials in good and useable condition is essential. Worn and obsolete materials discourage patrons in their

search for reliable information, encourage users to handle materials carelessly, and detract from the appearance of the library. In order to assure a quality, attractive, and up-to-date collection, library materials should be continuously evaluated. A decision shall be made on each book as deemed necessary: whether to mend it, rebind it, replace it or withdraw it from circulation. The following criteria shall be used in making those decisions:

1. Physical condition
2. Outdated (fine print, unattractive visuals, inaccurate content).
3. Inappropriate treatment of the subject when considered in relation to library users.
4. Demand
5. Historical value.

The Library will dispose of discarded materials in a manner that best suits their condition. They may be given to other libraries, offered for sale through the Friends of the Library, or they may be destroyed or recycled.

5. Outer library loan

- a. Outer library loan shall be used to obtain from other libraries those materials which are beyond the scope of the library's collection.

**E. Other Print Material**

1. Periodicals are purchased as a current, well-balanced, and in-depth supplement to the book collection. Selection is based on appeal and demand, the accessibility of a title's content through indexes, the accuracy and objectivity of the editor and authors, its contributions to trends in the field covered, and the preservation of a balanced viewpoint within the collection. Third party subscriptions (Overdrive) purchased as a collection of titles by a consortia, cannot be held to the same selection process.
2. Local History Materials are collected on a limited basis.

**F. Audiovisual Materials**

1. The library maintains or provides timely access to a collection of audio and video materials appropriate to the roles the library has chosen.
2. Criteria used for the selection of audiovisual materials
  - a. Materials are judged on the basis of the work as a whole, not on a part taken out of context.

- b. Reviews in professional journals and popular periodicals are used in the selection process.
- c. Patron demand

## **G. Challenged Material**

The Marshall Community Library has adopted as a part of their policies the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read (summarized version) and the Freedom to View statements. Therefore any attempt at censorship by an individual or a group will be challenged by the library. The review of questioned materials will be treated objectively, unemotionally, and as an important routine action. Every effort will be made to consider objections, keeping in mind the best interests of the library and the community. The final authority in such issues rests with the Library Board.

### Procedures for Challenged Materials

1. When a complaint on library material is received, oral or written, the Director will attempt to resolve the problem in discussion with the complainant.
2. If the problem cannot be resolved, the complainant will be given the form "Citizen's Request Form for Re-evaluation of Library Material" which must be completed and signed.
3. The completed form of the complainant along with a written statement from the Director indicating why the material was selected and purchased will go to the Library Board for their consideration at the next regularly scheduled Library Board meeting.
4. The complainant will be informed of the Library Board's decision.
5. During the process of reconsideration, questioned materials remain in the active collection until an official decision is made.

Patrons requesting that an item be moved or withdrawn from the Marshall Community Library collection must reside in the service area the library is funded to serve. Only one item per request per patron will be considered at a time. Once a title has been considered, it will not be reviewed again for a period of 2 years.

## **H. Revision**

This policy will be reviewed as necessary by the Library Board of Trustees.

Revised July 2023

## **A.L.A. Council - Freedom to View Statement**

Freedom to View, along with the freedom to speak, to hear and to read is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore, we affirm these principles:

1. It is in the public interest to provide the broadest possible access to films and any other audio-visual materials because they have proven to be among the most effective means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.
2. It is in the public interest to provide for our audience, films and other audio-visual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
3. It is our professional responsibility to resist the constraints of labeling or prejudging a film on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or film maker or on the basis of controversial content.
4. It is our professional responsibility to contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

## **A.L.A. Council - Library Bill of Rights**

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- 1 Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- 2 Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
3. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
4. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgement of free expression and free access to ideas.
5. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background or views.
6. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve and should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 18, 1948

Amended February 2, 1961, June 27, 1967 and January 23, 1980

## **A.L.A. Council - Freedom to Read Statement (summarized version)**

The heritage of free men and women is ours. We, therefore, affirm these propositions:

1. We will make available to everyone who needs or desires them the widest possible diversity of views and modes of expression, including those which are strange, unorthodox or unpopular.
2. We need not endorse every idea contained in the materials we produce and make available.
3. We regard as irrelevant to the acceptance and distribution of any creative work the personal history or political affiliations of the author or others responsible for it or its publications.
4. With every available legal means, we will challenge laws or governmental action restricting or prohibiting the publication of certain materials or limiting free access to such materials.
5. We oppose labeling any work of literature or art, or any persons responsible for its creation, as subversive, dangerous, or otherwise undesirable.
6. We, as guardians of intellectual freedom, oppose and will resist every encroachment upon that freedom by individuals or groups, private or official.
7. Both as citizens and professionals, we will strive by all legitimate means open to us to be relieved of the threat of personal, economic, and legal reprisals resulting from our support and defense of the principles of intellectual freedom.

Citizen's Request Form for Re-evaluation of Library Material

1. Author: \_\_\_\_\_ Book \_\_\_\_\_ Audio \_\_\_\_\_  
Hardcover \_\_\_\_\_ Video \_\_\_\_\_

2. Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Paperback \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

3. In what section of the library is the material located?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Adult \_\_\_\_\_ Young Adult \_\_\_\_\_ Children's

4. How was the material brought to your attention: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

5. Did you read, view, or listen to the entire work? \_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no.  
If no, what parts did you read view, or listen to? \_\_\_\_\_

6. What is your objection to the material? Please be specific, site pages:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Is there anything positive about the material? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. What do you believe is the theme of the material? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. Are you aware of how literary critics and reviewers judge this material? \_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no

10. What do you feel might be the result of reading, viewing or listening to this material? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

11. For what age group would you recommend this material? \_\_\_\_\_

12. In its place, what material would you recommend that would convey a valuable picture and perspective of the subject treated? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

13. What would you like the library to do about this material:  
\_\_\_\_\_ Do not lend it to my child.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Withdraw it from the library.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Return it to the library staff for re-evaluation.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Print or type Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Organization or group represented, if any. \_\_\_\_\_