

MIDDLETON PUBLIC LIBRARY COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

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I **Purpose of Policy**

- (A) Because of the volume of publishing as well as the limitations of budget and space, the library must have a collection development policy with which to meet community interests and needs if it is to fulfill its objectives.
- (B) This policy is used by library staff to select, maintain, and weed materials and also to serve to acquaint the general public with the principles of collection development.

II **Factors Affecting Collection Development**

- (A) The library has served the recreational, educational, and informational needs of Middleton since 1926. During its history, the library has grown with the community, adding services and materials in response to user needs and the appropriateness of new formats.
- (B) One of the most significant factors affecting collection development resulted from the library's participation in the Dane County Library Service, beginning in 1966, and the South Central Library System, beginning in 1975. The materials sharing network provided by these systems continues to have an impact on collection development in two ways:
 - 1. It makes resources from throughout the state available to patrons locally. It provides access to extensive collections of technical and historical materials, which encourages the library to concentrate its selection on materials likely to provide the broad, general-interest subject coverage that will meet the interests and needs of the larger segments of the public served.
 - 2. The South Central Library System provides funds to purchase multiple copies of books currently in heavy demand. This encourages member libraries, including Middleton, to purchase fewer duplicate copies of popular titles and also reduces the time patrons must wait for them.
- (C) A more recent significant factor, the sharing of an automated library system with other South Central Library System public libraries, has had a two-fold benefit.
 - 1. The immediate benefit of the library's participation in shared automation has been the provision of another, more immediate level of resource sharing. The holdings of LINK member libraries are available to Middleton patrons via on-line computer access and an extensive delivery system.
 - 2. The ideal benefit of this shared system will come about through the encouragement of participating libraries to diversify their purchasing patterns. This approach to selection should result in fewer systemwide multiple copies of marginal titles and an increase in the total number of titles available to patrons served by automated libraries.

III Responsibilities for Collection Development

- (A) The ultimate responsibility for collection development, as with all library activities, rests with the Library Director, who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Library Board.
- (B) This responsibility is shared with other members of the professional staff. The Youth Service Librarians select materials for children from infancy to age 12; the Teen Librarian selects materials for youth ages 12 to 18; and the Adult Service Librarians choose materials for adults from college age past retirement.
- (C) Because the Library Director must be able to answer to the library Board and the general public for actual selections made by staff, he/she has the authority to reject or select any item contrary to the recommendations of the staff.

IV Selection of Library Material: Criteria for Evaluation

- (A) General criteria. The selection of library materials involves the following factors and considerations:
 - 1. The experience and knowledge of staff selectors
 - 2. Familiarity with the community, its needs and interests
 - 3. Holdings and availability of other area library resources
 - 4. Library's existing collection and its materials budget
- (B) Criteria for judging materials:
 - 1. Materials are judged on the basis of the work as a whole, not on a part taken out of context.
 - 2. Reviews in professional journals such as *Library Journal*, popular reviewing sources such as *Newsweek*, and online sources, such as Amazon.com
 - 3. Opinions on selected works may also be solicited from area authorities or from electronic discussion groups.
 - 4. The lack of a review or an unfavorable review is not sufficient reason to reject a title for which there is demand.
- (C) Criteria for the selection of circulating **nonfiction** books:
 - 1. Qualification of the author in the subject field
 - 2. Scope and authority of the subject matter
 - 3. Quality of the writing (i.e., style, readability)
 - 4. Appeal to the general-interest reader
 - 5. Date of publication
 - 6. Reputation of the publisher
 - 7. Physical format (binding, typography, design, etc.)
- (D) Criteria for selecting **fiction** books:
 - 1. Popularity of the author (patron requests)
 - 2. Appeal to the general-interest reader
 - 3. Quality of the writing
 - 4. Literary merit
 - 5. Reputation of the publisher
- (E) Other guidelines for selecting fiction:
 - 1. Best-selling fiction: Books that appear on the best-seller lists of the *New York Times* and *Publishers Weekly* are not automatically purchased or they may be selected without the benefit of a positive review. The library will purchase two or more copies of a title when the ratio of holds to copies warrants it.

2. Retrospective purchases: As much as possible, the fiction collection should contain and best and most enduring of all the novels and short stories that have been published in the English language. Using standard bibliographies, the library will add and/or replace historically significant titles to its collection on a regular basis.
- (F) **The Reference Collection**
1. Librarians may choose to catalog some library items to remain in the building at all times. The decision to do that is based on heavy use (e.g., Value Line), cost (e.g., an unabridged dictionary) and frequency of referral by staff (e.g. the Polk Directory). In many cases an effort is made to buy a circulating copy of the title as well.
- (H) **The Periodical Collection**
1. A collection of magazines and newspapers is maintained for browsing purposes and as a supplement to the book collection. Requests for periodicals which fall outside the scope of the collection may be filled through the interlibrary loan network. The collection is evaluated on an annual basis.
 2. Selection of periodicals is based on the following criteria:
 - (a) Appeal to the general-interest reader
 - (b) Accessibility of a title's contents via online indexes
 - (c) Accuracy and objectivity of the editors and contributors
 - (d) Patron requests
 - (e) Preservation of a balanced viewpoint within the collection
 - (f) Access of content via online databases.
- (I) **Audiovisual Materials: Music Recordings**
1. Librarians try to purchase a cross section of musical styles which will appeal to a varied user group.
 2. Selection is based on demand, critical review, and the intent to provide a wide range of musical styles and genres.
- (K) **Audiovisual Materials; Audio Books**
1. Audio books are an important supplement to the print collection.
 2. As with print materials, librarians select audio books based on demand, critical review, and the intent to provide titles which have been deemed historically important.
- (J) **Audiovisual Materials: Video Recordings**
1. The library's videocassette and DVD collections are intended to serve the informational, educational, and recreational needs of the community. The collection strives to complement, rather than to compete with, local video rental stores by offering a different collection focus.
 2. Selection is based upon demand, critical reviews, and the intent to provide a wide range of materials to suit a variety of interests and tastes. Cost is another factor which may impact on selection of this format.
- (K) **The Middleton Collection**
1. The library maintains a collection of local history materials, including microfilm of the local paper, transcripts of oral histories, and government and civic publications
 2. The Middleton Collection does not attempt to be a comprehensive collection of all local history and municipal materials. Collection development concentrates on frequently used and requested materials.
- (L) **Gift Materials**

1. Materials donated to the library are not automatically added to the collection. These items are reviewed according to the selection criteria set forth in this section.
2. Gift materials not added to the collection will be disposed of according to section VII (D) of this policy.
3. A "Certificate of Gift" form, a sample of which is included in the appendix of this policy, is available upon request of the donor. Library staff will not assign a dollar value to any gift.

V Materials for Specific Audiences

- (A) Materials for Children
1. In selecting materials for children, the library's goal is to make available a collection which satisfies their informational and recreational needs.
 2. Materials are selected which meet the general needs of the majority of children. Materials whose qualities make them valuable to children with special needs, talents, problems, or interests are also considered.
 3. Criteria for materials selection are the same as for adult and young adult materials with the addition of vocabulary suitable to the age of the intended audience and quality of the illustrations in children's fiction.
- (B) Materials and equipment for the visually impaired, such as large-print books and magnifiers, are acquired according to patron demand. The library also encourages patrons with special needs to use the resources of the Milwaukee Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.
- (C) The library will continue to work with area libraries and organizations in the planning or expansion of services for those with special needs not currently being met or adequately met.

VI Maintenance of Library Materials

- (A) Most library materials are processed in such a way as to insure their maximum use under normal circumstances. Inexpensive paperbacks may be an exception to this policy.
- (B) All materials returned to the library are inspected for damage.
- (C) Damaged but still usable materials are mended according to an established set of procedures.
- (D) Patrons are charged a replacement cost for materials they check out that are irretrievably lost or damaged beyond repair. (See Circulation Policy, section VI for details.)

VII Weeding of Library Materials

- (A) Weeding is necessary to maintain a vital, useful, and up-to-date collection. This task takes skill, care, time, and knowledge of the materials to do a competent job.
- (B) Selection of materials for weeding is based on the following criteria:
1. Materials worn out through use.
 2. Ephemeral materials which are no longer timely.
 3. Materials no longer considered accurate or factual.
 4. Materials which have had little recent use and are of questionable value.
 5. Excess copies of a title no longer in demand.
- (C) Replacement of materials that are withdrawn is not automatic. The need for replacement is

based on the following criteria:

1. Number of duplicate copies.
 2. Existence of adequate coverage of the subject.
 3. Demand for the specific title or for material in that subject area.
- (D) Disposal of materials weeded from the collection is accomplished according to the following priorities:
1. Materials which can be used by another tax-supported library are made available to the library with all responsibility for transfer assumed by the receiving library.
 2. Materials which can be used by another tax-supported institution, not a library, are made available to that institution with all responsibility for transfer assumed by the receiving institution.
 3. Materials which are of no interest to other libraries or other tax-supported institutions but which are judged by the library Director to have possible resale value are kept for the Friends of the Library book sale, where they are offered on a first-come, first-served basis. No weeded or donated materials may be sold by library staff.
 4. Materials unsuitable for transfer or sale are discarded.
- (E) The Library will not accept requests to hold weeded materials for individuals.

VIII **Reconsideration of Library Materials**

- (A) The library recognizes that some materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons. Selection of materials will not be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval but solely on the basis of the principles set forth in this policy.
- (B) Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of their contents, and no library materials will be sequestered, except to protect it from injury or theft.
- (C) Responsibility for reading and the use of the library by children rests with their parents or legal guardians. At no time will library staff act *in loco parentis*. Selection of library materials will not be inhibited by the possibility that they may come into the possession of children.
- (D) Patrons requesting that an item be withdrawn from the collection may complete a "Reconsideration of Library Materials" form (one for books and one for movies), copies of which are included as part of the appendix to this policy. The inquiry will be placed on the agenda of the next regular meeting of the Library Board of Trustees. Their decision will be final.

Adopted May 14, 1981
Amended May 12, 1987
Amended August 13, 1991
Amended May 14, 1996
Amended June 12, 2006

Reconsideration of library materials (book)

Your Name _____ Today's date _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Author _____

Title _____

Please briefly answer the following questions about the book that you would like to have reconsidered.

1. How did you learn of this book?
2. What are your objections to this book?
3. What harm do you feel might result from reading this book?
4. Did you read the entire book? If not, what parts did you read?
5. Have you read any professional reviews of the book? If so, please list the names of critics and sources of reviews.
6. What do you think was the author's purpose in writing this book?
7. What book with a similar purpose would you suggest in place of this book?

**Thank you for taking the time to fill out this form.
The Library Director will respond to your concerns
within 7 days of the receipt of this form.**

Reconsideration of library materials (movie)

Your name: _____ Today's date: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Title of the movie _____

Please briefly answer the following questions about the movie that you would like to have reconsidered.

1. How did you learn of this movie?
2. What are your objections to the movie?
3. What harm do you feel might be the result of watching this movie?
4. Did you watch the entire movie? If not, what parts did you watch?
5. Have you read any professional reviews of the movie? If so, please list the sources of the reviews.
6. What do you believe are the main ideas of the movie and/or the filmmaker's purpose in making it?
7. What movie with a similar purpose or opposing viewpoint would you suggest in place of this title?

**Thank you for taking the time to fill out this form.
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