

## Section 3: Library Collections – revision approved 9/14/2023

### 3.01 Collection Development Policy

#### Responsibility for Selection

Although the North Shelby Library Board of Trustees is legally responsible for the operation of the library, the responsibility for the selection of library materials is delegated to the Director of Library Services who authorizes collection development staff members who are library professionals and are knowledgeable in their areas of selection to purchase for their departments.

#### Selection Process

The majority of the materials selection process is done online through vendor sites. These vendors provide thorough product descriptions which can include cover art, reviews, excerpts, release dates, and sales, print run, or box office figures, all of which facilitate the selection process. Additional materials are selected from review journals, print and online catalogs, awards lists, best seller lists, and promotional mailers. The Library also accepts patron requests which are considered based on the criteria for selection found below.

In general, selection is an ongoing process which includes the following steps:

1. Evaluate the existing collection and assess needs;
2. Consult reputable, professionally prepared selection aids and vendor sites;
3. Keep abreast of high interest titles reviewed in popular media as well as best seller and awards lists;
4. Solicit and consider recommendations for acquisitions from patrons;
5. Judge gift materials by the criteria listed in the "Policy on Gifts to North Shelby Library" accepting or rejecting them on the basis of those criteria;
6. Remove obsolete materials from the collection [see "Collection Maintenance /Weeding Policy"].

#### Examples of Sources Used during the Selection Process

The staff members in charge of collection development use a variety of resources to assist them in selection. These include:

- Professional journals (e.g. School Library Journal, Booklist, Publisher's Weekly, Kirkus)
- Popular media (e.g. People Magazine, Oprah's Book Club, Book Riot website)
- Best seller lists (e.g. New York Times, USA Today, Amazon)
- Vendor catalogs/selection lists (e.g. Baker & Taylor, Ingram, Midwest Tape, Overdrive)
- Award lists (e.g. National Book Awards, ALA Youth Media Awards, Pulitzers)
- Social reviewing sites (e.g. Goodreads, Common Sense Media, YouTube, TikTok)

#### Objectives of Selection

In order to assure that the library is a place where information, ideas and resources are available to all patrons the following selection objectives are adopted:

- To provide materials that will enrich and support the personal needs of the users, taking into consideration their varied interests, abilities, and learning styles;
- To provide materials that will stimulate growth in knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and ethical standards in a pluralistic society;
- To provide a background of information which will enable patrons to make intelligent judgments in their daily lives;
- To provide materials on opposing sides of controversial issues so that no one viewpoint is unduly represented.
- To place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of materials of the highest quality in order to assure a comprehensive media collection appropriate for the users.

## Criteria for Selection

The public library is the institution in our society that attempts to provide a diversity of viewpoints on a wide range of topics of interest including political, social, and religious ones – no matter how controversial or objectionable those ideas may be to some people. Selection of books or other library materials shall be made on the basis of their value of interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community. No book or library material shall be excluded because of the race, nationality, religion, sexuality, or the political or social views of the author. A balanced collection reflects a diversity of materials, not an equality of numbers. Materials are chosen representing different points of view, limited only by our selection criteria, budget, and space available in our facilities. The Board of Directors will uphold the principle that censorship is largely an individual matter and declares that while anyone is free to reject for oneself books which do not meet with the individual's approval, one cannot exercise this right of censorship to restrict the freedom to read of others. The responsibility for the choice of library material for minors rests with their parents or legal guardians.

## Guidelines for Evaluation and Selection of Library Resources

- Reputation and qualifications of the creator(s), publisher(s), or producer(s)
- Community needs, interests, and demand
- Present and potential relevance to community needs
- Relevant to today's world, reflecting problems, aspirations, attitudes, and ideals of society
- Representative of differing viewpoints on controversial subjects
- Clear and accurate with the scope of text or audiovisual presentation appropriate to the needs of the users
- Quality format and value, commensurate with cost and/or need
- Authenticity of voice
- Representative of diverse points of view
- Judgment of the work as a whole

## Types of Materials Not Generally Purchased by the Library

- Textbooks or curriculum materials
- Workbooks or journals
- Collector's Editions
- Non-fiction books published more than 5 years ago or that are no longer factually accurate
- Out of print materials
- Items not available through library vendors

Items requested by patrons that fit into these categories or that cannot be purchased due to budget constraints or other considerations will be requested for the patron through ILL (interlibrary loan).

## Policy for Gifts to North Shelby Library

The North Shelby Library welcomes gifts of books, periodical subscriptions, works of art, media, other educational materials and equipment, and money for the purchase of library media materials and equipment.

Materials and equipment are accepted with the understanding that the item(s) meet(s) the standards in the library's Collection Development Policy.

Gifts are irrevocable; those weeded from or not added to the collection may be disposed of as the Director of Library Services deems appropriate.

The Director of Library Services under the guidance of the Board of Trustees reserves the right to determine appropriate use, housing, and maintenance of gifts or to delegate that determination to the appropriate staff member.

The Library will not appraise gifts. A donor may request a receipt for the number of items donated.

North Shelby Library hereby states it is currently in good standing with the Internal Revenue Service as a charitable organization under 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and contributions to the North Shelby Library are deductible charitable contributions to the donor. We have also received sales tax exemption from the State of Alabama Department of Revenue.

Donors will be supplied with appropriate statement regarding any monetary donation which is tax deductible.

#### Collection Maintenance/ Weeding Policy for North Shelby Library

Both print and non-print materials should be reviewed and evaluated at regular intervals to determine if they are to remain in the current collection. This final step in the selection process ensures the library collection will contain materials that are factual, undamaged, and in-demand. Staff members in charge of collections should consider space, budget, and user needs when deciding how much and how often to weed. Staff members also actively search for replacement items for dated materials.

Depending on condition, materials withdrawn from the collections may be offered for sale through the Friends of the Library groups. Donations and other items not added to the collection may also be included in these sales. Damaged or factually inaccurate materials may be disposed of.

#### Suggested Criteria for Weeding

Record of use- the item has not circulated for an appropriate amount of time for its collection, generally 1-5 years.

Currency- the subject matter is out-of-date, factually inaccurate, or no longer relevant to current times; illustrations are outmoded or perpetuate gender, racial, or cultural stereotypes.

Technical Quality- non-print materials with poor visuals, faded or off-color visuals; faulty or inferior sound reproductions.

Dispensability- duplicate copies no longer needed in the collection.

Physical Condition- the item is torn, soiled, or worn; pages or parts are missing.

Poor Purchases- materials purchased that were not quality items and/or items not appropriate.

Reliability- non-fiction item which contains factual information inconsistent with other sources.

Short-lived Topics- the item is faddish and no longer of interest.

Subject Areas- the information is not timely.

Dewey Decimal Balance- the item is unneeded to balance the collection.

Careful consideration should be practiced in weeding an item that:

- is a work of historical significance in the field of literature.
- has unusual illustrations or the illustrations are by a well-known artist.
- is a work by a local author or illustrator.
- describes local history or personalities.
- is a memorial gift.

However, North Shelby Library is not an archive or research library and no items are kept indefinitely when they meet criteria for weeding.

## Reconsideration Procedures

The North Shelby Library supports the principles of intellectual freedom inherent in the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States and expressed in the Library Bill of Rights of the American Library Association, or final judgments or rulings by a court of competent jurisdiction. However, patrons residing in the North Shelby Library District who are in good standing with the library and current on District Assessments may request materials be withdrawn or reconsidered and should be afforded every opportunity to express their concerns.

Materials reflecting diverse viewpoints and opinions are included in the collection through the library's commitment to provide a broad base of information upon which individuals can formulate intelligent, well-researched decisions. An item in the collection will not be removed at the request of anyone who disagrees with the content or format unless it can be proved that it is in violation of the North Shelby Library collection development policy. A work is evaluated as a whole, not by excerpts taken out of context.

If a complaint is made, the following procedures shall be followed:

1. If possible, the patron should be referred immediately to the department head or Director of Library Services. The department head or director should then have a discussion with the patron about the material in question informing the patron of the selection policies and the procedures for questioning materials.
2. If the patron wishes to pursue the complaint further, they must submit a request for reconsideration form to the Director of Library Services. The patron will be provided with a written copy of the collection development policy (3.01), the Library Bill of Rights (1.04), the ALA Freedom to Read statement (1.05), and a copy of the reconsideration form (3.01a).
3. Staff should inform the Director of Library Services when a form is given out.
4. Each request form will be limited to a single title. Multiple requests may be submitted by the same patron, but the library staff will determine which material will be reviewed first and will generally conduct only one review at a time. Library materials shall only be subject to review once every three years. A maximum of three book complaints is allowed per household per 12 months.
5. The challenged materials will remain in circulation during the reconsideration process. The library will not purchase additional copies but will take all steps possible to obtain copies from other libraries.
6. Upon receipt of the completed complaint form, the Director of Library Services will respond to the patron within 2 business days to inform them of the process.
7. The Director will then request a review of the challenged material by a Review Committee within fifteen business days.
8. The Review Committee, facilitated by the library director, will meet once all members have been able to review the material in its entirety.
9. The Director informs the patron and the Board of Trustees of the decision made by the Review Committee within 2 business days of the decision.
10. The patron may make a written appeal to the Board of Trustees at least 14 days in advance of a scheduled Board meeting.
11. The decision of the Board of Trustees is final.
12. Reconsideration committee decisions are reported to appropriate agencies and archived in Board Meeting Documents.

## Review Committee

The Review Committee is called by the Director of Library Services and approved by the Board of Trustees. The Review Committee consists of five members. The director serves as the facilitator but does not vote.

- One Alabama-certified K-12 educator
- One member of the Friends of the North Shelby Library or Mt Laurel Library
- One North Shelby Library District Librarian
- One Public Librarian from the community
- and one patron residing in the North Shelby Library District who is in good standing with the library and current on District Assessments

The Review Committee responsibilities include:

- reading, viewing, or listening to the material in its entirety
- meeting with the other members of the Review Committee and:
  - checking general acceptance of the material by reading reviews and consulting recommended reading lists from reputable sources such as ALA, Booklist, Common Sense Media, or other libraries
  - determining the extent to which the material supports the collection development policy
  - evaluating material for its strength and value as a whole and not in part

At the conclusion of their meeting, the Review Committee will make one of the following decisions:

- Retain the material
- Move to a different collection in the library
- Withdraw from circulation

### 3.01a Collection Development Policy Appendix A: Request for Reconsideration Form

#### *Reconsideration of Library Resources*

The Board of Trustees of the North Shelby Library has delegated the responsibility for selection and evaluation of library resources to the Director of Library Services, and has established reconsideration procedures to address concerns about those resources. Completion of this form is the first step in those procedures.

If you wish to request reconsideration of library resources, please return the completed form to Director of Library Services, North Shelby Library, 5521 Cahaba Valley Road, Birmingham, AL 35242.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Do you represent:             Yourself  
                                      Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Resource on which you are commenting:

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Book        | <input type="checkbox"/> Audio                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DVD/Blu-Ray | <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Game        | <input type="checkbox"/> Digital                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Magazine    | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____ |

Have you examined (read/heard/seen) the material in its entirety?    \_\_\_ Yes    \_\_\_ No

Author \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher/Producer \_\_\_\_\_

What brought this resource to your attention? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What concerns you about the resource? **Please cite specific passages, pages, etc.** (use other side or additional pages if necessary)

Are there resources you recommend that provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic?

How is the material contrary to the collection development policy?

Please attach any professional reviews of the material.

## **Guidelines**

Under the best professional standards, reconsideration policies ask those charged with reviewing a challenged book or other resource to set aside their personal beliefs and evaluate the work in light of the objective standards outlined in the library's collection development policy. Listed below are some best practices for Reconsideration Committee members:

- Bear in mind the principles of the freedom to read and base your decision on these broad principles rather than in defense of individual materials. Based in the First Amendment, the freedom to read is essential to our democracy.
- Read or view all materials referred to you including the full text of the material in question, available reviews, and notices of awards, if applicable.
- Review the library mission statement, collection development policies, and reconsideration policies.
- The general acceptance of the materials should be checked by consulting standard evaluation aids and your institution's selection policies.
- Challenged materials should not be removed from the collection while under reconsideration.
- Passages or parts of the work in question should not be pulled out of context. The values and faults should be weighed against each other and the opinions based on the materials as a whole.
- The committee's decision is to be an objective evaluation of the material within the scope of the library's collection development policy.



## Review Committee Discussion Guide

Review Committee members should read, view, or listen to the material in its entirety then meet with other members of the Committee at the designated time to determine if the material should be retained, moved, or withdrawn. This guide is designed to help in that discussion.

**Title:**

**Author:**

**Purpose/theme:**

### Does the work meet one or more selection criteria from the Collection Development Policy?

- Reputation and qualifications of the creator(s), publisher(s), or producer(s)
- Community needs, interests, and demand
- Present and potential relevance to community needs
- Relevant to today's world, reflecting problems, aspirations, attitudes, and ideals of society
- Representative of differing viewpoints on controversial subjects
- Clear and accurate with the scope of text or audiovisual presentation appropriate to the needs of the users
- Quality format and value, commensurate with cost and/or need
- Authenticity of voice
- Representative of diverse points of view
- Judgment of the work as a whole

### Reviews and lists

The Library will supply reviews of this material and the names of selection lists it appeared on.

Review committee members can also check for additional sources. Please be able to discuss:

- The source of the review or list
- Whether the review was favorable or unfavorable
- Any biases the review or list might contain

### Decision

At the conclusion of their meeting, the Review Committee will vote by secret ballot to make one of the following decisions:

- Retain the material
- Move to a different collection in the library
- Withdraw from circulation