

Materials Selection Policy of the Canterbury Public Library

I. PURPOSE OF POLICY

The purpose of this written Materials Selection Policy is to provide a document, approved by the Canterbury Public Library Board of Trustees, to guide the Library staff in selecting library materials and to inform the public of the principles on which selections are based.

II. MISSION and VALUES STATEMENT

Mission Statement

The Canterbury Public Library is dedicated to providing Canterbury residents with a comfortable space from which they can freely access ideas and information in a variety of formats to: educate our youth; create young readers; assure an informed citizenry; encourage the free flow of ideas and diverse viewpoints; promote lifelong learning; nurture a love of literature; and spark the imagination and creativity of all so that future opportunities and problems can be met with confidence and optimism.

Statement of Values

The Library Board of Trustees and Staff are committed to:

- ❖ Offering a welcoming and respectful environment*
- ❖ Delivering responsive customer service*
- ❖ Providing open and free access for all*
- ❖ Protecting intellectual freedom and personal privacy*
- ❖ Responding with initiative, creativity, and flexibility*
- ❖ Collaborating with, connecting to, and building community*
- ❖ Managing library resources in an ethical and responsible manner*

III. INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

As a basis for formulating this Material Selection policy, the Library uses the following documents in support of intellectual freedom:

- Library Bill of Rights
- The Freedom to Read
- The Freedom to View*
- Free Access to Libraries for Minors**
- Statement on Labeling

The listed documents have been adopted by the American Library Association and are appended to this policy.

* For Internet-specific viewing policies, please see the separate document titled "Canterbury Public Library Computer Use Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines."

** For policies governing access for minors to non-print media, please see the separate document titled "Canterbury Public Library General Operating Policies."

In addition, the Library adheres to Connecticut General Statute **Chapter 190; Sec. 11-25(b1-5)**, which outlines confidentiality of records.

Sec 11-25 (b)(1) Notwithstanding section 1-210, records maintained by libraries that can be used to identify any library user, or link any user to a library transaction, regardless of format, shall be kept confidential, except that the records may be disclosed to officers, employees and agents of the library, as necessary for operation of the library.

(2) Information contained in such records shall not be released to any third party, except (A) pursuant to a court order, or (B) with the written permission of the library user whose personal information is contained in the records.

(3) For purposes of this subsection, "library" includes any library regularly open to the public, whether public or private, maintained by any industrial, commercial or other group or association, or by any governmental agency, but does not include libraries maintained by schools and institutions of higher education.

(4) No provision of this subsection shall be construed to prevent a library from publishing or making available to the public statistical reports regarding library registration and use of library materials, if such reports do not contain personally identifying information.

IV. CONSTITUENCIES TO BE SERVED

The Canterbury Public Library serves Canterbury residents of all ages and through ConnectiCard, a statewide cooperative program among Connecticut libraries, serves any Connecticut resident with a valid library card from another town. The Library also supports the information needs of local businesses and organizations by including materials that support their interests in a general manner.

V. RESPONSIBILITY AND CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

Responsibility for Materials Section

The initial responsibility for materials selection rests with the Library Director and Professional Staff, under the guidance of the Library Director, who operate within the framework determined and documented herein by the Canterbury Public Library Board of Trustees. Should an item within the collection be challenged, it will be the responsibility of the Library Director to defend its selection within this framework to the Library Board of Trustees.

Criteria for materials selection

The Library supports intellectual freedom and as such has adopted the American Library Association Library Bill of Rights. Policies on discards and donations have also been adopted.

Materials selection is considered a judgmental and interpretive process, involving general knowledge of a subject and its important literature, familiarity with the materials in the collection, awareness of bibliographies on the subject, and recognition of the needs or anticipated needs of the community. Consideration is given to reviews, authoritative discussions of the literature on the subject, and other appropriate aids such as ALA Book List, The New York Times Book Review magazine, VOYA, Kliatt, Horn Book, and School Library Journal. Suggestions from patrons are welcome and are given serious consideration.

Library materials will include but are not limited to the following formats: books, periodicals, newspapers, pamphlets, video recordings, maps, sound recordings, realia, audio-visual equipment, and foreign-language materials. Materials for the blind and handicapped in the form of talking books and cassettes can be arranged through the Library. The Library has large print materials as part of its book and magazine collections.

The Library shall keep its collection vital and useful by retaining or replacing essential materials. Works that are worn, outdated, inaccurate, of little historical significance or no longer in demand shall be removed on a systematic and continuous basis. Each type of material shall be considered in terms of its own merit and the audience for whom it is intended. No

single standard can be applied in all cases. It shall be the goal of the Library to be inclusive, not exclusive, in developing collections.

The professional staff will select materials according to the following criteria:

- Reputation or significance of author or work
- Value as resource material
- Suitability of physical form for library use and storage
- Suitability of subject and style for intended audience
- Relation to existing collection and other materials on the subject
- Price and availability of funds
- Timeliness, reflecting new areas of knowledge or changing conditions of the contemporary scene
- Attention of critics, reviewers, and public
- Heavy demand for popular items

Periodicals

The Library strives to maintain a balanced collection of periodicals. Selection is generally based on the accuracy and objectivity of the editor and authors, and its contributions to current thinking. Purchase and retention decisions are made on the basis of the quality of the periodical and heavy public demand.

Audiovisual Materials

This collection reflects the community's educational and entertainment interests, but is not intended to compete with the more extensive inventories of rental outlets. Audiovisual materials are acquired using the same criteria applied to book selection. The Library is a member of the Connecticut Library Consortium. On a regular schedule, a new packet of borrowed visual materials and audio books is available for local use.

Educational Materials

It is not the responsibility of the Library to supply textbooks. Textbooks may be purchased when the subject content constitutes the best available source of needed information.

Interlibrary Loan

The Library cannot purchase every item of value or all materials that may be requested by patrons, but extends its resources through cooperation with other libraries and networks. The Library accesses available interlibrary loan sources through Request, the statewide library catalog. Request is available through iCONN.org, which also includes numerous licensed databases for Connecticut citizens who obtain a 14-digit library barcode from their local library.

Materials Selection for Children

The Children's Collection provides materials for young people from infancy through thirteen years of age. This collection includes books in various formats, paperbacks, magazines, pamphlets, visual materials, computer software, compact discs, educational games and toys.

Materials for children are selected by professional staff that is knowledgeable about children and children's literature using standard reviewing sources such as Horn Book, Booklist and School Library Journal.

The Parenting Shelf provides materials which help parents, teachers and other care givers to understand and support the physical, emotional and intellectual development and well-being of children and adolescents.

The materials selection objectives for the children's collection are:

- To encourage children's use of the Library and their skills in reading, communication, imagination, and creativity.
- To provide children and their parents with age-appropriate materials for children's comprehension and enjoyment.

The ultimate responsibility for children's use of materials rests with parents or guardians.

Materials Selection for Young Adults

Emphasis of the Young Adult Collection is on popular browsing materials. The Young Adult collection is flexible, current, and attractive, containing materials for ages fourteen through nineteen which:

- are in demand and of high interest.
- are of special quality which will help young adults understand themselves and others.
- will broaden their viewpoints and knowledge of the world.
- will stimulate their curiosity
- will expand both their reading ability and reading enjoyment.

Selection of young adult materials is based upon recommendations of standard reviewing sources such as VOYA, Kliatt, and Booklist. The Library does not exclude a title because of objectionable language or vivid descriptions of sex or violence if the material otherwise meets general selection criteria.

VI. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Controversial Materials

The Library recognizes its obligation to provide materials that reflect current interests although they may not have enduring value. The Library also recognizes that some materials are controversial and may even offend some patrons. Selections are not made based on anticipated approval or disapproval, but on anticipated use and interest by patrons. No materials will be removed from open shelves or kept in a restricted area because of their controversial nature, subject matter, or viewpoint.

Request for Reconsideration of Materials

No challenged materials that have been duly selected shall be removed from the Library's collection except on the recommendation of the Library Board of Trustees.

The procedure to be used when a patron challenges materials is outlined in the following steps.

1. A patron challenging any part of the collection will be offered a copy of the Materials Selection Policy to read.
2. If the material is still questioned, a copy of the form "Request for Reconsideration of Canterbury Public Library Resources" needs to be completed by the patron.
3. The Library Director will review the form and inform the Library Board of Trustees of the challenge.
4. The Library Director will work with the Library Board of Trustees to generate a written response to the patron's challenge.
5. If the patron is not satisfied with the reply, he/she can bring the matter directly to the attention of the Library Board of Trustees, not less than one week prior to a scheduled meeting.
6. The Library Board of Trustees will further review all communication, and the issues raised and will respond to the patron when the review process is complete.

The Board has the legal responsibility for the collection and its protection under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. As such, the Library Board of Trustees may seek assistance in support of follow-up communication with a patron who has challenged Library-held materials. Resources from which the Board of Trustees may seek assistance include—but are not limited to—the Connecticut Library Association and the Office of Intellectual Freedom of the American Library Association.

VII. MAINTENANCE OF THE COLLECTION

The Library Director is responsible for maintaining the collection, which includes an ongoing program of withdrawing, replacing, and limited rebinding and repair – decisions requiring the same careful consideration as initial materials selection.

The Library routinely removes (deaccessions) books and other materials to maintain the usefulness of the collection and to make the best use of available space. Reasons for removal include the following:

1. Physical condition

- Materials too badly worn or soiled to be restored
- Unattractive condition (e.g., yellowed or brittle paper)

2. Intellectual content

- Outdated information
- Superseded editions

3. Circulation history

- Materials having little or no circulation or use in the past three to five years
- Duplicate copies of titles no longer in demand

The Library attempts to retain rare, valuable, and historical materials, as well as works acknowledged as classics in their fields. These works should generally not be removed until replaced by more recent and attractive editions.

Withdrawn materials may be offered to the Friends of the Canterbury Public Library for their public book sales, which benefit the Library.

VIII. REVISION OF POLICY

The Library Board of Trustees will review this policy no less frequently than every three years.

APPENDICES

American Library Association Documents in Support of Intellectual Freedom:

Library Bill of Rights

The Freedom to Read

The Freedom to View*

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Adopted by the Canterbury Public Library Board of Trustees on June 28, 2010