

Library Materials Selection Policy

Introduction

The Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library is organized under the laws of Kansas pursuant to KSA 1992 Supp. 12-1260 et seq. The Board of Trustees of the Library is authorized “...to acquire by purchase, gift or exchange, books, magazines, papers, printed materials, slides, pictures, films, projection equipment, phonograph records and other materials and equipment deemed necessary by the board for the maintenance and extension of modern library services.”

A democratic society depends on the ability of individuals to seek, receive, and consider a wide range of ideas without interference. Libraries support this constitutionally protected freedom by providing equitable access to materials and viewpoints that reflect the full diversity of human thought and experience. By protecting intellectual freedom, ensuring inclusive access, and safeguarding privacy, libraries remain essential forums for inquiry, expression, and the free exchange of ideas.

The Library supports the diverse needs and interests of community members by providing collections that connect them to learning opportunities, reliable information, and entertainment.

This policy outlines the principles, responsibilities criteria, and procedures to guide library staff in selecting, maintaining and evaluating all library materials including physical, digital, non-print and art collections, and in ensuring equitable access to a well-balanced and representative collection.

Responsibility for Selection

The Board of Trustees delegates to the Chief Executive Officer the responsibility for selecting library materials to staff whose education and professional experience prepared them for selecting materials.

Guided by the selection criteria outlined in this policy, these appointed staff members select materials that reflect the needs and interests of community members and others granted borrowing privileges. The selection of any item does not constitute the Library’s endorsement of the creator’s ideas, or any other particular beliefs or perspectives.

The Library does not act *in loco parentis*. Parents and guardians are responsible for guiding their children in choosing materials

Staff may use labels to help community members locate materials, but not to warn, discourage, or restrict access based on content, language, or theme.

General Selection Criteria

The selection of all materials is guided by the criteria outlined in this policy. While a single standard cannot be applied to each item the library may choose to include in its collection, the following general criteria are to be used in selecting all library materials:

- Contribution to the overall value and balance of the collection
- Reputation and credibility of the creator or publisher
- Current appeal, demand, and timeliness
- Significance and relevance of the subject matter, including local interest
- Availability of other materials on the topic
- Physical space available
- Cost and durability
- Level of difficulty, specialization and suitability for a public library
- Quality of reviews, summaries and professional evaluations
- Format appropriateness and accessibility within area libraries
- Inclusion in recognized indexes, bibliographies or standard lists
- Artistic merit, scholarship or lasting informational value
- Demonstrated or anticipated community demand

Digital Collections

The Library maintains digital collections designed to meet community members' needs in parallel with physical item collections. The General Selection Process above also applies to digital materials.

To broaden access, the Library may also offer streaming and database services, whose titles are not selected by library staff. The Library works closely with digital content providers to ensure these collections meet library standards.

Deaccessioning

The Library conducts regular, systematic evaluations of its collections, using professional collection management tools and established weeding guidelines. Staff are responsible for ensuring the collection remains current and responsive to community needs. Any library material which no longer satisfies the applicable selection criteria as described in this policy may be deaccessioned from library collections. The Board of Trustees delegates the Chief

Executive Officer responsibility to deaccession library materials, and to select staff whose education and experience prepare them for this important function.

Materials removed from the collection may be sold or otherwise disposed of by the Library through its agent, the Friends of the Library.

Selection Criteria and Deaccessioning of Art

In addition to the General Selection Criteria above, the following additional criteria must also be met in selecting or deaccessioning works of art:

- No work will be knowingly acquired whose ownership or legality is questionable
- No work will be acquired which forms a part of the patrimony of a foreign country or is endowed with such religious significance by an ethnic group that possession of it in a public collection constitutes a violation of the ethical standards adopted by the museum profession
- Gifts of art with restrictions will not be accepted
- Deaccessioned art may be sold, exchanged, transferred, or otherwise by the Library through its agent, The Friends of the Library.

Library Patron's Opinions of the Collections

The Board of Trustees recognizes the importance of providing methods so that opinions from community members regarding material selection can be communicated and responded to promptly and courteously as outlined in the Expression of Concern process found on the Library website and as appended hereto as Exhibit A.

Document History

Selection Policy Statement was developed by the Materials Selection Committee and with contributions from other staff.

Adopted by the Library Board of Directors, September 14, 1983.

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