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Collection Development Policy
Verona Public Library

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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 cultural, recreational, educational, and informational needs of Verona since 1947. During its history, the library has grown with the community, adding and withdrawing services and materials in response to user needs and the development of new formats.

(B) The Verona Public Library Mission Statement: Build community by bringing a world of knowledge together. Additionally, we will adhere to and support the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement. (See Appendix.)

Therefore, the Verona Public Library is a place where ideas and information are freely communicated. A broad spectrum of opinions and a variety of viewpoints are represented in its collections, displays, programs, and services.   These opinions include but are not limited to majority and minority cultures, the works of men and women from all age groups, and the various lifestyles, abilities, and diverse aspects of our society. The library strives to present materials representing all sides of an issue in a neutral, unbiased manner. The existence of a particular viewpoint in the collection is an expression of the library's mission statement and its support of the American Library Association's "Library Bill of Rights" and the "Freedom to Read Statement" and is not an endorsement of a particular point of view.

(C) The Verona Public Library participates in the Dane County Library Service, the South Central Library System, and the LINKcat shared automated library catalog. The materials sharing network provided by membership in these organizations has an impact on collection development in these ways:

1. It makes resources from within the system and 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. By belonging to these organizations, certain rules governing collection development apply to satisfy membership criteria and the cooperative nature of each organization.

Without such rules, any one library could bear the load of the demand for popular titles for other libraries' patrons. Therefore, certain thresholds exist, that once met, require member libraries to purchase items thus minimizing waiting periods for patrons.

3. The holdings of LINKcat member libraries are available to Verona patrons via on-line computer access and through an extensive delivery system. The benefit of this shared system comes through the encouragement of participating libraries to diversify their purchasing patterns. This approach to selection results in fewer system-wide multiple copies of marginal titles and an increase in the diversity and total number of titles available to patrons served by member 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 of Trustees.

(B) The Director delegates selection for specific areas to other qualified members of the staff. This places the initial selection functions at the level where the greatest contact with the public occurs or at the level where there is expertise. For instance, generally, the Youth Service Librarians select materials for children from infancy to age 12; the Teen Librarian selects materials for youth ages 12 to18; and the Adult Service Librarians choose materials for adults from college age past retirement.

(C) All staff members, as well as the public, are encouraged to suggest materials to be considered for purchase. All recommendations are to be considered by the Director in line with selection policies.

(D) 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 library aims to present information on all subjects at a general interest/initial study level. The emphasis is on current materials intended to meet the general interests of the layperson and student. Materials added are adequate to support up to high school and some introductory undergraduate courses, as well as beginning independent study.
2. When possible, knowledgeable staff selectors are assigned subject areas of expertise.
3. Holdings and availability of other area library resources are considered.
4. The library's existing collection and its materials budget are weighed against the need for items.

(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 are used from professional journals such as *Library Journal,* popular reviewing sources such as *Time*, 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.
5. If a scarcity of information in a particular subject area exists, material in that area may be selected even though it does not meet the usually applied standards.

(C) Selection criteria may include:
1. Qualification/reputation of the author or artist
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 durability, access provided, typography, design, etc.)
8. Current and anticipated needs and interest of the public
9. Accuracy of content
10. Evaluations in review media
11. Inclusion in standard bibliographies or indexes
12. Receipt of or nomination for major prizes or awards
13. Affordability
14. Holdings and availability of other area library resources
15. Support of the library's mission and roles
16. Library's existing collection and its material budget
17. Age appropriateness of art, text, and topic
18. Relationship of illustration(s) to text
19. Popularity of the author (patron requests)

(D) Other guidelines and considerations for selecting materials:
1. Best-selling items: Materials that appear on the best-seller lists, such as the *New York Times* or other similar lists, are not automatically purchased or may be selected without the benefit of a positive review.

2. Retrospective purchases: Using standard bibliographies, the library will add and/or replace historically significant titles to its collection as needed.

3. The Reference Collection: 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., *The PDR*), cost (e.g., an unabridged dictionary), and frequency of referral by staff (e.g. *Consumer Reports* publications). In many cases, an effort is made to buy a circulating copy of the title as well.

4. The Periodical Collection: A collection of magazines and newspapers is maintained for browsing purposes and as a supplement to the book collection. Requests for periodicals that fall outside the scope of the collection may be filled through the interlibrary loan network.

5. Music Recordings:

a) Attempts are made to purchase a cross section of musical styles that will appeal to a varied user group.

b) Selection is based on patron demand, critical review, and the intent to provide a wide range of musical styles and genres.

6. Audio Books: Audio books are an important supplement to the print collection. In addition to being a popular format for the general public, audio books allow the library to serve patrons with disabilities or special needs. Over time, audio book formats are subject to change (i.e., cassettes, CDs, playaways, digital downloads, etc.). Technological advancements and vendor availability or continuation of support will be a determining factor for continuing a specific format for library collections.

7. Video Recordings: Video recordings are an important supplement to the print collection. In addition to being a popular format for the general public, video materials allow the library to serve patrons with disabilities or special needs. Over time, video formats are subject to change (i.e., VHS, DVDs, digital downloads, Blu-ray, etc.). Technological advancements and vendor availability or continuation of support will be a determining factor for continuing a specific format for library collections.

8. Computer/Video Games: Games are an important supplement to the print collection. Games are a mode of active engagement. They encourage experimentation and positive risk-taking to achieve a goal. Games foster creative thinking as a means to problem solving, and they stress the process of solving a problem to be as important as finding the answer. Games span language barriers, and players do not necessarily need to speak English to participate. The library has collected computer games since they were available. Over time, game formats and systems are subject to change (i.e., floppy disk, CD-ROM, X-Box, PlayStation, Nintendo Wii, etc.). Technological advancements and vendor availability or continuation of support will be a determining factor for continuing a specific format for library collections.

9. Local History Collection: The library maintains a collection of local history materials, including but not limited to local newspapers, directories, photographs, and government/civic publications. The Local History 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.

10. Gift Materials:
    a) 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.
    b) Gift materials not added to the collection will be disposed of according to section VI (D) of this policy.
    c) A "Certificate of Donation" 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.

11. Textbooks: Providing textbooks and curriculum materials is generally held to be the responsibility of the schools. Textbooks may be added to the collection when they may be the best or the only source of information on a subject.

12. Databases: As the world moves to more digital formats, the publishers of materials (i.e., books, newspapers, magazines, journals, reference books, language learning programs, etc.) also move to those formats. Databases are added to the collection when they are the best or only source of information on the subject.

13. E-book readers and e-book content: Over time, the written word formats are subject to change (i.e., stone tablets, scrolls, books, newspapers, databases, Kindle, Nook, iPad, etc.). Technological advancements and vendor availability or continuation of support will be a determining factor for continuing a specific format for library collections. E-book readers and e-book content may be purchased to keep up with the demand and to supply the Verona Public Library users with the technological knowledge necessary to be up-to-date.

V.   Maintenance of Library Materials

(A) Most library materials are processed in such a way as to ensure their maximum use under normal circumstances. Inexpensive paperbacks may be an exception to this policy.

(B) Damaged but still usable materials are mended according to an established set of procedures.
(C) Patrons are charged a replacement cost for materials they checkout that are irretrievably lost or damaged beyond repair.
1. Unless the item is damaged to a point where it is unhealthy to remain in the building (mold, mildew, etc.), Verona Public Library's damaged items will be made available to the payee if payment is made within 3 months of the bill issued. After 3 months, damaged items will be discarded. Discarding items does not absolve the patron of the fine for damage.
2. If the item is owned by a library other than the Verona Public Library, the patron must make it known that they want the damaged item. The Verona Public Library will note it in the computer record and with the paperwork sent with payment to the owning library.
3. If the item is retrieved from the owning library the Verona Public Library will notify the patron to pick up the item and hold it for 30 days. After 30 days the item will be discarded.
4. The Verona Public Library cannot guarantee retrieval of damaged items from other libraries as individual library's policies will govern the items they own.

VI.   Weeding of Library Materials

(A) Weeding is a positive and necessary function that upgrades the collection's appearance, usefulness, space it occupies, and the time required to maintain it. This task takes skill, care, time, and knowledge of the materials to do a competent job. The library's goal is to review all materials at least once every five years for possible weeding. Some areas need more frequent attention.

(B) Criteria to consider when weeding materials:
1. Information that is dated
2. Information that is incorrect

3. Availability of improved or newer editions
4. Material no longer in demand in the community
5. Duplicate copies of a title that are no longer in demand
6. Condition and appearance
7. Space availability
8. Low circulation statistics
9. Existence of a newer format

(C) Replacement of materials that are withdrawn is not automatic. The following criteria are considered when determining the need for replacement:
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.
4. Existence of a newer format as a replacement.

(D) Discarded materials may be offered to other libraries or are passed on to the Friends of the Library for resale. Materials unsuitable for transfer or sale are discarded. The library will not accept requests to hold weeded materials for individuals.

VII.   Reconsideration of Library Materials

(A) The Verona Public Library recognizes that many materials are controversial and that at any given time an item may offend some patrons. Selection of materials will not be made based on approval or disapproval but solely on the principles stated in this selection policy. Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of their contents, and no library material will be sequestered except to protect it from injury or theft.

(B) The Library Board believes that censorship is purely an individual matter and declares that while anyone is free to reject for himself/herself books and other materials, that he/she does not approve of, he/she cannot exercise this right of censorship to restrict the freedom of other persons to read or use other library materials. The Verona Public Library adheres to and supports the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement. (See Appendix.)

(C) Responsibility for supervising children's use of the library and library materials rests with parents or legal guardians.   At no time will the library staff act *in loco parentis.* Selection of library material will not be inhibited by the possibility that materials may come into the possession of children.

(D) Patrons requesting that material be withdrawn from the collection may complete a "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" form, a sample of which is included in the Appendix of this policy. The request for reconsideration will be addressed in writing by the Library Director within (10) ten days. The Library Director may wish to investigate the content of the item in question. He/she may assign a panel of staff members to evaluate the item in question. This will be completed in no more than (30) thirty days of the initial request for reconsideration. The panel's recommendations will be considered, and the Library Director's final decision will be mailed to the patron. Patrons may appeal the decision of the Library Director to the Verona Public Library Board of Trustees. An appeal must be made in writing and delivered to the Library Director. Upon receipt of the written appeal, discussion of the appeal will be scheduled on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Library Board of Trustees. Their decision will be final.

Appendix of the Collection Development Policy includes:

"Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" form
"Certificate of Donation" form
"Freedom to Read Statement"
"Library Bill of Rights"

This policy replaces any previous policy regarding collection development.

Library Board Approved on August 6, 2008
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