

MATERIALS POLICY

Goal and Scope:

The Voorheesville Public Library serves the community as a center of lifelong learning by providing a variety of resources to inform, educate, entertain, and culturally enrich all residents of the Voorheesville Central School District. Among other activities, this is accomplished by providing books, audio-visual materials, digital materials, information services, and a wide variety of items useful to the community such as electronics and technology, physical objects, and seed libraries.

Due to constraints on space and resources the Library must judiciously select the materials in its collection and withdraw materials that are not used based on community needs and its primary mission as a public institution. As a public library serving broad community needs, the Voorheesville Public cannot always serve the specialized information needs of individual community members. However, the Library strives to provide access to specialized materials through a variety of services and directing community members to alternate resources. The present policy establishes the process and general principles used to:

- select materials to be included in the Library's collections;
- withdraw materials from its collection; and
- provide access to materials and information not in its collection.

The policy also provides guidance on how community members can question the selection of materials.

This policy encompasses all physical materials, digital materials, information services, access passes, licenses, and any other resources that the library provides to community members.

Responsibility:

Ultimate responsibility for collection development rests with the Library Director, under the authority of the Board of Trustees and in compliance with this policy. The Library Director, in turn, delegates the authority for selection to designated professional staff who make individual selection decisions.

Selection and Evaluation Criteria

Approved on: 12/9/2019
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Selection Criteria

Library staff utilize professional judgment and expertise in making collection development decisions, including decisions about choosing titles, identifying quantities for purchase, and selecting locations for materials. Anticipated demand, community interests, strengths, and weaknesses of the existing collections, system-wide availability, physical space limitations, acquisitions procedures, and available budgets are all factors taken into consideration. Materials are acquired in multiple formats when appropriate, including print, audiovisual, and digital resources. Highest selection priority is given to those materials in all formats having the broadest appeal. In addition, library staff evaluate items based on quality and timeliness of content, and significance of the author, creator, or publisher. Items may be purchased to support a library program or initiative, or to fulfill a patron's request. An item need not meet all of these criteria to be selected.

Access

The Library strives to provide access to all print materials, even those not included in its collection. To achieve this, the Library will request items through the Upper Hudson Library System's intra-library loan service, and when needed, will request items through our world-wide interlibrary loan service. Additionally, the Library participates in the Capital District Library Council's Direct Access Program, which provides limited access to local academic library holdings.

Selection Sources

Sources for selection decisions encompass, but are not limited to, published reviews from standard review sources, publisher/vendor catalogs and advertisements, professional and trade bibliographies, and patron requests and recommendations. The Library strongly encourages patron input, and all patron requests and recommendations are subject to the selection criteria outlined above.

Gifts

The Library accepts gifts of materials for the collection using the same selection criteria that are applied to purchased materials. Decisions regarding the final disposition of gifts are the responsibility of designated staff, using the following guidelines:

- The Library retains unconditional ownership of the gift.
- Unused gifts may be given to the Friends of the Library for public sale or further disposal as those groups deem suitable, or they may be disposed of through other means determined by the Library.
- The Library does not place a value on gifts, nor provide appraisals for income tax or any other purpose.

Collection Evaluation and Maintenance

Once materials have been added to the Library's collection, they are managed through an assessment and evaluation process to ensure ongoing collection priorities are met; collections remain up to date, balanced, and attractive; and space limitations are minimized. This process identifies items for replacement, retention, or de-selection. Library staff utilize professional judgment and expertise in deciding which materials to retain, replace, repair, or de-select.

De-selection (removing items from the collection) is an integral part of collection development. De-selected materials will, at the Library's discretion, be donated to the Friends of the Library for book sales, or disposed of through other means determined by the Library. The Library retains those materials that continue to have enduring or permanent significance to its mission and overall collection goals.

Along with the same criteria used to select new materials, general criteria for retaining, replacing, repairing or de-selecting include:

- Availability of item in alternative formats within the UHLS system
- Feasibility and cost of repair
- Historical significance, interest, or value
- Physical condition
- Relative usefulness of item
- Space considerations
- Superseded, inaccurate, or out-of-date content
- Usage

Reconsideration of Library Materials

The Library welcomes expressions of opinion from patrons concerning materials selected or not selected for the collection. If a patron questions the content, tone, or placement of an item in the collection, he/she should first address the concern with a Library staff member. Patrons who wish to continue their request for reconsideration of library material may submit the Request for Reconsideration form.

After receiving the completed request for reconsideration, the Library Director will appoint an ad hoc committee consisting of two professional staff members with relevant subject knowledge. The committee will evaluate all requests to add or remove material from the collection within the context of the Collection Development Policy. During this process, the material in question will remain accessible to Library patrons. The committee will make a recommendation to the Library Director, who will respond by letter to the patron. This process will be completed within sixty days of receipt of the request form.