



# Materials Selection Policy

## **Authority and Responsibility for Selection of Library Materials**

The final authority for the determination of policy to guide the selection and acquisition of library materials is vested in the Library Board of the Three Rivers Regional Library System. The responsibility for all materials selected, as for all library activities, rests in the Library Director, who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Library Board. The Director may delegate responsibility for the selection of books and other materials to designated, trained, qualified persons. All staff members, as well as the general public may recommend materials to be considered for purchase. All recommendations are channeled through the procedures defined and considered within these selection policies.

The public library asserts its right, and its responsibility to keep on its shelves a representative selection of books on all subjects of interest to its readers, including materials and information portraying all viewpoints of controversial questions. The library has no right to emphasize one subject at the expense of another, or one side of a subject without regard to the other side. It must carry important materials on all sides of a topic, and on as many subjects as possible.

The Library Board believes in the power of informed citizens in their communities. The Board also believes that it is the responsibility of parents to become involved in their child's learning and should assist them in selecting materials suitable to their beliefs, age and learning level.

## **SELECTION CRITERIA**

The library system's policy is to purchase, or accept as gifts, the best books and other materials which can be located, to meet the need of the library's community which consists of Dixie, Gilchrist, Lafayette, and Taylor Counties. Materials selection policies begin with a study of the communities, of the organization of existing collections of the library, and of the services which the library is expected to perform. Materials selection is intended to implement the general goals and objectives of the Three Rivers Regional Library System. The purpose is to obtain expertly-written books and other materials to further guide and assist those engaged in educational pursuits as well as to provide information and recreational materials. Certain criteria are followed for all types of library materials:

- Importance of the subject matter to the collection
- Need of subject information by residents
- Timeliness and/or permanence of the work
- Favorable reviews or appearance in special bibliographies and indexes
- Literary value
- The author's significance and reputation as a writer
- Public request
- Reputation and standing of the publisher
- Price of material
- Availability of material elsewhere in the area
- Community interest
- Currency of topic
- Accurate information

## **MATERIALS SELECTION TOOLS**

The staff makes skilled use of selection aids, publishers' basic general lists, current general lists, special bibliographies for reference books and subject materials, and book reviewing journals. While reviews are a major source of information about the new materials, they are not followed blindly. No single publication is relied upon to the exclusion of others. The critical opinions of reviewers are checked against each other and evaluated in the light of standard selection principles. The library staff will also use

methods that allow for the direct examination of library materials, when possible. The library also accepts requests and recommendations for library materials.

## **SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AND FORMATS**

### *Adult Materials Selection*

Points considered in adult materials selection are their relevance to the informational, recreational, and life-long learning needs of the library patrons. In works of fiction, contemporary and popular authors are included, as well as those who have proved enduring worth. Titles may be selected on the basis of the personal history of the author. Works of non-fiction serve important needs in the communities. The public library should place an emphasis on the importance of informal education for adults. Because limited adult educational opportunities exist for adults in these counties, this is taken into consideration when selecting adult non-fiction. Attempts are made to keep these collections up-to-date, as funding allows.

### *Young Adult Selection*

The aim of the library in serving young adults is to contribute to the development of well-rounded citizens alert to challenges and opportunities in the world. To this end, readable young adult titles are selected that are keyed to the young adult's needs and interests, as well as materials that will tend to open up new interests to the young person. Titles written specifically for the young adults are naturally included. The young adult collection should include a basic level of reference materials.

### *Children's Materials*

The basic policy of materials selection for children is to buy the best new materials and to replace and duplicate older titles which have proven their value. Selection covers all fields and stresses the importance the library system places on serving children.

### *Paperbacks*

The library realizes the importance of paperback books. For all age groups, these books are convenient, light-weight, and very easy to use. Senior citizens often rate paperbacks as their favorite type of book because of their weight and the ease in holding these books. Youth readers also value these books for their convenience. The library typically strives

to purchase hardcover books for many subject areas because they last longer. However, the library will purchase some paperbacks because they are the preference of many patrons involved in recreational reading.

### *Textbooks*

The library purchases textbooks only if the book is of value because of its content, its need in the book collection or is of permanent demand by the general public. It is not the library's responsibility to purchase a volume purely because it is a text-book of a class offered in the community.

### *Newspapers and Periodicals*

Newspapers will be purchased to supply the patron's needs for current local and regional information. Each library will subscribe to the county newspaper with the largest circulation, as well as a daily from the closest city or metropolitan area. Magazines and periodicals are purchased for their relevance in bringing current information for the library user and to supplement the library's other collections.

### *Reference Collection*

Reference materials for both children and adults are purchased based on staff and patron use and attempts are made to update these materials as often as possible. Reference materials include, but are not limited to almanacs, atlases, CD-ROM's, dictionaries, directories, encyclopedias, genealogy, government documents, handbooks, indexes, legal materials, literary, local history, microforms, professional library collection and yearbooks. Reference materials do not circulate.

### *Audio-Visual and Other Non-Print Material*

Family and Children's movies will be actively purchased along with Hollywood Classics and Instructional selections. Audio materials have been deemed valuable and an important part of the collection by the many library patrons that commute long distances to work. These audio materials will be purchased with the same criteria as the Adult Collection. Library materials in other formats are evaluated in accordance with need as it relates to the library's goals. The member libraries may rotate portions of their audio

and video collections on a regular basis to assist the needs of the other libraries. Examples of subjects rotated include health and educational related videos.

### *Lifelong Learning Materials*

Part of the library system's mission is to serve the people of the member counties in their pursuit of lifelong learning. The library system will purchase test guides for school and occupational training. Emphasis will also be placed on supporting literacy and aiding adult learners.

### *Large Print Materials*

As many patrons either prefer or find large print materials necessary, the libraries will collect these materials to support its mission in serving these patrons.

## **DUPLICATION**

Occasionally, duplication may occur in the purchasing of library materials for various age levels. Duplication often occurs in attempts to meet the public's demand for specific titles or subjects. Since titles are acquired only if they meet the standards of selection, they will be duplicated if the demand increases, subject to budget limitations and to the timely or permanent values of the title. Such duplication, however, should be kept to a minimum.

## **REPLACEMENT AND MENDING**

Items in need of replacement or restoration will be evaluated to consider their continuing value and patrons demand for the item. Availability of new materials that will better suit the collections are considered when replacing or mending an item.

## **GIFTS**

Gifts of library materials and funds will be gratefully accepted. All donated materials will become the property of the library system and will be evaluated against the same criteria as purchased materials. The library system has a library board approved gift and donation policy which is available for review at each county library.

## **INTERLIBRARY LOAN**

Library users not finding the library materials they need in their library's collection may request the library to borrow the item from another library through interlibrary loan.

### **EXCLUSIONS**

If a book is not chosen for the library's collection, it has been excluded because:

- It does not measure up to the library's standards stated within this policy
- The library system already has adequate coverage in the subject
- Or because of budget limitations

### **COLLECTION REVIEW AND WEEDING**

Materials in need of removal from the collection may be donated to the Friends of the Library, other non-profit community groups or discarded.

### **INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM**

The Three Rivers Regional Library System subscribes to the attached statements by the American Library Association for the Library Bill of Rights and Intellectual Freedom. Library patrons may request that an item be removed from the library by using the "Request for Reconsideration of Materials" form at the end of this packet or from any of the member libraries.

### **REVIEW OF COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICIES**

These policies will be reviewed continuously by the library staff as it attempts to meet the communities' needs.

**APPROVED BY THE BOARD ON MARCH 9, 2017**