



Farmington Community Library Materials Selection Policy

Purpose

The purposes of this policy are to further the stated mission and identified roles of the Farmington Community Library, to guide librarians in the selection of materials and to inform the public of the principles upon which selections are based.

Responsibility Selection

The responsibility for the selection of Library materials is vested in the Board of Trustees. The Board delegates the responsibility for selection and purchasing of all materials to the Library Director. Under his or her direction, the professional staff, who are qualified by reason of education and training, select materials for children, young adults and adults, within the framework of policies determined by the Library Board.

General Responsibilities

Freedom of expression and unrestricted access to diverse opinions is guaranteed by the Constitution. Free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society. Those with faith in free people, who believe that ordinary citizens exercising their critical judgment will accept the good and reject the bad, will defend these essential rights.

The Library Board adopts and incorporates the following documents of the American Library Association as part of this Materials Selection Policy; *The Library Bill of Rights*, *The Freedom to Read Statement*, *The Intellectual Freedom Statement* and *The Resolution on Challenged Materials*. These documents are appended to the materials Selection Policy. The Library shall also be guided in its selection policy by guidelines or minimum standards that are published by library professional organizations.

The Library feels that it can carry out its policies and objectives best by making available the widest diversity of views and forms of expression, including those which are unusual, unorthodox or unpopular. Creative thought is by definition new and what is new is different. To stifle non-conformist ideas at their inception would interfere with the democratic process.

In following these principles, neither the Board nor the staff endorses every thought, expression or viewpoint represented in the materials. However, the Library has an obligation to provide access to a broad range of views so that people shall have the freedom to read and consider a broad range of ideas.

Materials are examined from a variety of points of view to determine if an item merits inclusion in the collection. The fact that flaws exist in some materials does not make them bad. A single passage, or even a number of passages, may prevent a work from being considered perfect, but it will not preclude the selection of an item because of other factors that merit its inclusion in the collection.

While the Library staff and Board will at all times give an attentive ear and earnest consideration to contrary viewpoints from responsible individuals and groups, it will not be influenced by efforts to coerce or pressure the Library in its selections by such individuals or groups who may seek to impose their concepts of taste or other matters to suppress or restrict Library holdings. In a free society, each individual is free to determine what he or she wishes to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members; however, no individual or group has the right to impose standards upon other members of a democratic society.

General Selection Criteria

Materials are selected principally to provide for the informational, educational, cultural and recreational needs of the Farmington communities. To achieve these ends, the Library shall strive to establish a comprehensive collection to aid the general reader in the pursuit of formal education, practical information and creative use of leisure time. Materials of contemporary significance and permanent value are selected within the limitations of space and budget. Some experimental and ephemeral materials are also included, although no attempt is made to be exhaustive. Competent review media, basic lists of standard works, important bibliographies and review copies are consulted whenever possible to aid selection. One or more of the following standards will be applied in selecting materials:

- Importance of the subject matter to the collection
- Style and literacy or artistic quality
- Suitability in content, vocabulary and form
- Permanent or timely value
- Clarity, authenticity, scope and appropriateness
- Reputation and significance of the author, illustrator or publisher
- Need to provide balance in the collection and opposing points of view, especially on controversial subjects
- Treatment of racial, ethnic, national, religious, sex or age groups
- Scarcity of materials on the subject
- Popular appeal
- Accuracy and objectivity
- Cost

Other Considerations in Selection

The availability of materials elsewhere in the community is a consideration in the development of the collection. Duplication is provided to meet average needs, not occasional excessive demand. To assist in handling requests for best sellers and other new materials, the Library shall purchase or lease duplicates for the collection.

Some materials may be purchased as representative examples of types of materials or because they contain points of view or forms of expression that are not represented elsewhere in the collection. Frequently, materials of this type are experimental.

The Library selects materials in a variety of formats, including books, electronic media, periodicals, recordings, compact discs, tapes, art works, microforms, large print, films, paperbacks, pamphlets and maps. A particular format is chosen based upon the suitability of the format for the subject and upon the intended use of the material.

Withdrawal

The Library's collection will be constantly reviewed. Withdrawal and replacement decisions will be based on the actual condition of the book, current validity of its contents, cost of replacement, available space and current adherence to the selection policy.

Library's Relationship to the Community

The needs of various age and interest groups in the community must be reflected in the Library's acquisitions. The Library strives to build a collection for general use and will seldom be able to provide materials for a specialized interest, although occasionally, additional funding or gifts may enable the Library to establish a special collection. However, the Library will endeavor to build subject collections with substantial breadth and depth in areas that correspond to community interests.

Recommendations from Library patrons are welcomed by the Library. Patrons may wish to request either purchase or reconsideration of materials. Forms are available to Library patrons for these purposes. All requests from patrons will be given consideration. The criteria established by the Library's selection policy shall be used to determine whether or not materials examined because of patron requests shall be purchased or withdrawn from the collection.

Cooperative relationships are maintained with school, college and university libraries. While the schools provide the students of the community with resource materials in their school libraries, the Farmington Community Library accepts responsibility for serving this large and important segment of its clientele with supplementary reading and reference materials. Textbooks are purchased only when they provide the best available coverage of the subject and are useful to the general public. They are not duplicated to satisfy the demand of a specific course.

Materials for Children and Young Adults

Materials chosen for inclusion in Children's and Young Adult's Collections must meet the same criteria as do all other Library materials; in addition, it must be recognized that the wide differences of needs and interest of these groups, as well as differences in reading ability, are of primary importance in selection of materials for these collections.

In selecting materials for young adults, the Library recognizes certain dominant characteristics and interests of adolescents. This is a period of rapid mental, physical and emotional growth, as well as a period of exploring and changing ideas, attitudes and beliefs. The Young Adult Fiction Collection will contain materials focusing on currently controversial or problem areas encountered by adolescents.

Exposure to alternative standards and life styles can assist in the development of a personal value system and in the evaluation of contemporary issues. Before becoming part of the Young Adult Collection, materials that challenge adolescents will be carefully appraised to assess their contribution in informing young adults and in adding their development.

In general, it shall be the practice of the Library to provide materials recommended for a specific age group. Some parents may believe that some materials are more suitable for their child than others either because of personal reading objectives that they deem appropriate for their child's development or because of the maturity level of their child. Although the Library provides reader's advisory service to assist patrons in locating suitable materials, it is the responsibility of parents to supervise their own children.

Special Collections

The Library has established special collections to meet specific user needs which cannot be fulfilled by the general collection. Special collections include, but are not limited to: Large Print; Michigan and Farmington History; Grants/Fundraising; Business; Law; and Parent-Teacher Professional materials.

Gifts

Gifts of materials or funds to purchase materials are accepted by the Library with the understanding that they may be added to the collection, sold, exchanged, given to other organizations or discarded. Gifts added to the collection shall be subject to the same standards as purchased materials.

Area of Limited Acquisition

The Library's capability to provide service is limited by the size of physical and financial resources and by the size and expertise of the Library staff. Patrons seeking resources in subject areas that require technical expertise may be referred to larger resource library collections or to special libraries in the subject area. Materials in specialized subject areas that may be considered for purchase shall be closely examined to determine that they are suitable for the Library's collection.

Relationship to Other Libraries

In extending service to the community, the Library depends on resources available in surrounding libraries. Because of the Library's membership in a cooperative, materials for which there is infrequent demand may be borrowed through interlibrary loan and need not be purchased. The cooperative use of resources throughout the region provides the patron access to a larger number of resources than could be provided by any one library.

Approved by the Library Board of Trustees, August 9, 1990