

# Collection Development

## MATERIALS SELECTION

The purpose of this policy is to: (1) serve as a guide for the librarians of Middleton Public Library in the process of materials selection; and (2) inform the public of the principles upon which selections for the Library are made. The collection development policy of the Middleton Public Library supports the general mission of the Library, the Library Strategic Plan, the *Library Bill of Rights\** and the *Freedom to Read Statement\**.

Middleton Public Library strives to provide current and factual information to supplement and enrich individual learning, and to provide materials for recreational reading and other leisure time activities. This information should be readily available to the total community regardless of gender, age, education, language, religion, ethnic and cultural background, or mental and physical ability.

## STANDARDS FOR SELECTION:

Middleton Public Library is a popular materials library and maintains a varied and up-to-date collection. It attempts to acquire materials of both current and lasting value. Since one library cannot afford all the available materials, it must employ a policy of selectivity. The Library Director has the overall responsibility for the selection and development of the materials collection according to the principles established by the Materials Selection Policy and other approved policies and procedures. In practice, the responsibility for materials selection is shared with other staff.

Materials are selected to meet patron needs and reflect a variety of viewpoints and opinions. Criteria for consideration include popular demand, literary merit, enduring value, accuracy, authoritativeness, local interest, social significance, importance of subject matter to the collection, timeliness, cost, scarcity of information on the subject, availability elsewhere, and quality and suitability of format.

**Fiction** – The Library maintains a representative collection of novels and works of fiction to satisfy a wide range of tastes. Ideas of literary merit vary greatly with individuals. Therefore, the Library purchases fiction in many categories.

**Non-Fiction** – The Library attempts to provide a large general collection of reliable materials embracing the broader fields of knowledge. Legal and medical works will be selected to the extent that they are useful to the lay person.

**Juvenile** – Materials are selected to encourage children and families to discover the joy of reading. In order to meet the varied abilities and interests of children, the collection includes materials covering a wide range of knowledge and reading levels. The illustrations in books for young people are given as much critical attention as the literary quality of fiction.

**Media** – The Library recognizes its responsibility to provide access to information, cultural enrichment and recreation through as wide a variety of media as possible. Media is evaluated by the same criteria as

printed materials. As new technologies are developed, the Library will investigate the appropriateness of new media formats and will acknowledge the need for experimentation.

**Digital Materials** – Digital items such as eBooks and eAudiobooks shall be selected using the same criteria as printed materials as described above.

**Online Databases** – The Library makes available a variety of online resources purchased to supplement and enhance the Library’s collection. These resources are evaluated on the basis of timeliness, ease of use, and ability to meet patrons’ information needs.

**The Library will:**

- Provide a collection that anticipates the needs and numbers of potential users
- Consider public demand, both specific and general, as expressed through requests, suggestions, and use to develop the collection
- Consider the availability of the same, or similar, materials in other libraries or agencies
- Consider the need for all subjects covered and viewpoints expressed
- Consider the effect that subjects and viewpoints selected have on developing a balanced collection
- Consider the appropriateness to scope of the collection as it is developed
- Consider the unique nature of branch locations in developing their collections
- Accept only donations that are outright gifts

**Selectors will consider these characteristics when selecting:**

- Literary or stylistic quality
- Reputations, qualifications, and significance of author, producer, or publisher
- Accuracy, currency, timeliness, and validity
- Attention of critics, reviewers, awards and public
- Physical quality and effectiveness of format and appropriateness of format to subject
- Cost, as measured against competing materials on the same subject
- Availability of discounts and efficiency in vendors used for purchasing
- Suitability for intended audience
- Availability of subscriptions and standing orders for popular materials, reference and nonfiction items published or released annually

**COLLECTION MAINTENANCE**

Middleton Public Library staff routinely evaluates the collection and removes materials in accordance with Middleton Public Library’s weeding guidelines. These materials are usually those which are worn out, out of date, no longer needed in the quantity originally purchased, or are in formats that have become obsolete.

### **Reconsideration of Materials**

The Middleton Public Library Board is legally responsible for all matters relating to the operation of the library. It delegates the responsibility for selection of library materials to the library staff as assigned through the Library Director. Suggestions for the library collection are welcomed from patrons. While a particular item may offend some patrons, selection of materials will not be based upon any anticipated approval or disapproval, but rather on the merits of the material and its value to the collection. The final responsibility for the selection decision rests with the Library. The use of library materials by patrons is an individual matter. Responsibility for children's and teen's use of library materials rests with their parents or legal guardians.

Library patrons may object to selected library materials by completing the Material/Program Reconsideration Form. Once a completed form is received by the Library Director, a thoughtful, deliberative process for reconsideration of the library materials identified by the library patron will begin. While each request for reconsideration will be handled on a case-by-case basis, designated staff will look at awards, reviews and demand for the particular item, and make a report to the board. The final decision as to the inclusion of material in the library collection will be made by the library board.

\*As adopted by the Council of the American Library Association