

MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Presque Isle District Library “*Materials Selection*” Policy is to guide librarians and to inform the public about the principles upon which selections are made.

“*Materials*” are either in print or non-print formats – either purchased or donated, which includes: books, magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, video recordings, sound recordings, and other forms of media.

“*Selection*” refers to the decision made either to add a given title to the collection or to retain one already in the collection.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Final responsibility for materials selection rests with the Library Director who administers under authority of the Board of Trustees. The selection of materials will be made by a designated staff member(s).

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

All library selections and acquisitions are made in terms of the following standards:

- Accuracy of content
- Historical or permanent value of the work
- Reviews in professional library publications
- Importance of the work to the library’s existing collection
- Contemporary or timely social significance of the topic
- Availability of other materials on the same topic in the collection
- Accessibility for the general public to the same material elsewhere in the community
- Suitability of the material in representing varied levels of complexity to reflect the educational backgrounds and reading skills of the members of the community
- Quality of the physical format, including satisfactory binding, print size, durability and illustrations
- Reputation of the publisher
- Price
- Popular demand guided by consideration of merit, demand for use, and balance of amounts of material already in the collection
- Presentation of all sides of controversial issues

An individual, selected item need not satisfy all criteria listed above to be acceptable for the collection. A wide range of materials are selected to meet the needs of the community.

The selection of any material should not be construed as an endorsement by the Library of the views contained within.

CHILDREN'S MATERIALS

Supporting the belief that through good books children will help develop as an informed citizen and as a lifetime reader, the following factors will be considered by the librarian and any other professionally trained employee:

- Materials will be chosen which have an attractive format and illustrations in harmony with text
- Fiction should be well-written and imaginative
- Non-fiction should be accurate, informative and up-to-date
- Subject matter, format and reading level should be appropriate for the age level intended
- Literary style should be appropriate to the subject matter
- Materials that are highly recommended in review sources will be given greatest priority

It is our policy to supplement the juvenile collection whenever necessary by material from the adult collection. The idea that some older students and adults are best served by books found in the juvenile collection is also supported.

PERIODICALS

Periodicals are part of a balanced library collection. Presque Isle District Library will purchase appropriate titles for the periodical collection.

Titles will be selected by designated staff, to provide a varied collection. Whenever possible a balance of viewpoints will be maintained.

Gift subscriptions are welcome. Gift subscriptions of any type will be accepted only at the discretion of the Library. The donor should be prepared to continue the subscription for three years. The Library should be notified prior to ordering/receiving. If there is no notification, the Library accepts no responsibility for keeping the periodical.

REFERENCE SELECTION

The selection of reference materials is similar to the materials selection policy for the Library in general.

The goal of the reference materials is to acquire and make available to all patrons, resource materials that will meet informational needs.

The Library will purchase the best reference materials available, within the limitations of space and budget.

Although the Library will not have reference works in foreign languages or highly specialized works, the Library will maintain an adequate and suitable collection of reference materials and resources to be consulted or referred to for accurate information.

The Library will attempt to add materials of local/regional, historical, and genealogical interest for research purposes.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Textbooks

Textbooks are purchased only when no other source of information is available or when they represent the best information source available.

Duplication

Multiple copies of items in particular demand will be supplied within reasonable limits; however, duplication will be kept to a minimum.

Re-evaluation and Discard

All materials are subject to re-evaluation and discard. This includes out-dated non-fiction and once popular fiction no longer in demand. Among those attributes considered will be physical condition, number of copies available, use, adequate coverage in the field, and availability of similar material.

When materials are withdrawn they may be offered to the general public.

Gifts

Unconditional gifts and memorials are accepted without commitments as to their final disposition. The same criteria used to select purchased materials apply to gifts. The Library will attempt to dispose to the best advantage all gift materials not retained.

The Library will provide, upon request, a receipt showing the date and number of materials donated, by format, but will not undertake an appraisal of the items for tax purposes. [See also Gift, Donation, and Memorial Policy]

Students

While the collection contains materials on a variety of subjects aimed at all reading levels, the Library does not make any attempt to become curriculum oriented, to provide multiple copies of single titles, or to duplicate subject materials for class assignments.

School libraries should be considered the primary source for obtaining materials for school assignments. Consideration will be given, however, to materials for people engaged in independent study. Interlibrary Loan services are available to help meet these needs.

EXCLUSION OF MATERIALS

The Library recognizes that some materials are controversial in nature and may offend some patrons. However, disapproval of an item by an individual or group should not be the means by which that item is denied to all individuals or groups.

Materials which present an honest and realistic picture of social problems or some aspect of life are not excluded because of frankness, language or description.

Library materials are not marked or labeled to indicate approval or disapproval of their content.

The Library supports the American Library Association's "Library Bill of Rights", the "Freedom to Read Statement", and the "Freedom to View Statement", all of which are included as exhibits of this policy.

CHALLENGED MATERIALS

Please treat patrons that question an item in the collection with common courtesy. If at all possible, converse with the patron away from the circulation desk so not to attract the attention of others. Show patience and understanding when listening to the complaints.

Refer the person to the library director at their convenience. Do not remove the disputed materials when the complaint is made.

If a patron questions the appropriateness of an item, it will be documented on a "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" form (sample is attached), and signed by the patron challenging the item. The item will be examined by designated staff member(s). The patron will be notified in writing by the director and given the reasons for the decision. If the patron wishes to pursue the matter, he/she may request to be placed on the Board of Trustees agenda whose decision will be final.

SPECIALIZED COLLECTIONS

Law

The purchase of law materials for the professional lawyer is beyond the scope of the Library. The Library will consider for purchase, materials for the layperson which are authoritative, up-to-date and understandable, on coping with everyday legal matters for the layperson.

Medicine

The purchase of medical materials for the professional doctor, dentist, psychiatrist, etc. is beyond the scope of the Library. The Library will consider for purchase, materials for the layperson which are authoritative, up-to-date, and understandable on health, hygiene and common diseases.

Sex

The Library has a responsibility to obtain materials suitable for the layperson with various educational backgrounds. Considered are the needs of the parents, teachers, clergy, social workers, adolescents, children, and those married or about to be. Materials are selected based upon accuracy, simplicity, and dignity of presentation.

Religion

As an unbiased institution, the Library's collection will be broad and tolerant.

Local Works

Special consideration will be given to works by local authors and artists.

Adopted: October 12, 2016

Presque Isle District Library

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Are you a PIDL cardholder or do you live, work, own property, or attend school in our service area? Yes _____ No _____

Who do represent? Self _____ Organization _____

If organization, please provide the name: _____

Title: _____

Author: _____ Type of Material: _____

(Artist, Performer, etc.)

(Book, DVD, Program, etc.)

Did you read, view, or listen to the entire work? Yes _____ No _____

Have you read any professional reviews of this work? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please list publication(s) here:

What do you believe is the major theme or intent of this work?

What is your objection to this work? Please be specific. _____

What do you feel might be the result of reading, viewing, or listening to this work?

What action do you wish to be taken?

Please explain how such an action would improve the Library's service to the community:

In its place, what work of equal literary quality would you recommend the Library purchase that would cover the same subject or content?

Signature

Date

Completed forms should be delivered to:

Presque Isle District Library
Attn: Library Director
181 East Erie Street
Rogers City, MI 49779

LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted: June 19, 1939. Amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; and January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996, by the ALA Council.

THE FREEDOM TO READ STATEMENT

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and

librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of

enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.

FREEDOM TO VIEW STATEMENT

The **FREEDOM TO VIEW**, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the **First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States**. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore these principles are affirmed:

1. To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantees of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association (formerly the Educational Film Library Association) and was adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.