

Material Selection and Collection Development Policy

Adopted by the Board of Trustees April 14, 2010

Public libraries are organized under the laws of Kansas and authorized under K.S.A. 12-1219 et seq. to acquire by purchase, gift or exchange the materials and equipment deemed necessary by the board for the maintenance and extension of modern library services.

Material acquisition for the Pittsburg Public Library is based on the library's efforts to ensure access to lifelong learning for all ages, through the following:

1. Introduce very young children to the joy of reading.
2. Provide high-interest, low-vocabulary materials.
3. Provide in-depth resources in select areas of special interest to our community.
4. Meet the informational and recreational needs of the community.
5. Purchase large print books to meet the needs of the community.
6. Supplement formal and informal study.
7. Enhance job-related and basic business knowledge and skills.
8. Support economic, cultural, recreational, and civic activities in the community.
9. Increase knowledge of and participation in the affairs of the community, the state, the country and the world.
10. Reflect cultural diversity.
11. Reflect a variety of opinions, both majority and minority.

While the overall responsibility for the materials selection policy lies with the trustees of the library, the board delegates to the library director the responsibility for selection of materials and the development of the collection. The director works with other staff members to design the selection program for the library.

General criteria for collection development includes but is not limited to:

- Examination of the existing materials in the collection on the same subject to determine if additional or more current materials are needed
- Reputation of the author, artist, publisher or producer
- Suitability of subject, style, and reading level for the intended audience
- Current appeal and popular demand
- Present and potential relevance to the community
- Availability or scarcity of materials on the subject
- Value of material in relation to durability

In addition to the general selection criteria, the following criteria are also considered for acquisition of fiction:

- Plausible plot and good plot development
- Effective characterization
- Imaginative writing and originality
- Literary merit
- Accurate description of the particular era or country in which it is set
- Ability to sustain reader's interest
- Appropriateness for the age of the intended audience.

Library staff primarily uses the following review sources for recommendations for material purchase:

- Booklist
- Library Journal and School Library Journal
- New York Times Book Review
- Publishers Weekly
- VOYA (Voice of Youth Advocates).
- Amazon customer reviews

In addition, patron requests and highly publicized material are considered for purchase under the same criteria as all material.

The purchase of replacements and duplicates is judged by these factors:

- Number of copies available in the collection and the number of patrons waiting for the book
- The coverage the library has on the subject
- The demand for subject material in that subject area.
- The availability and cost of a particular title

Gifts or donations of books or other materials are accepted with the understanding that they may be used or disposed of as the library determines is appropriate, using the same criteria set forth in this policy for the purchase of library materials. Gifts that are not added to the collection are placed in the Friends of the Library book sale.

[Under existing law, gifts to libraries may be deductible, governed by the provisions of the Internal Code of 1986 as amended. If a potential donor of books or other non-cash items asks the library for an appraisal, IRS regulations and the Tax Reform Act of 1984 (Section 155a) state that the appraiser must not be the library that receives the items. Donors are required to obtain a formal appraisal if the value of donated property is valued at \$5,000 or more. If a library sells or disposes of a gift of property or materials valued at \$500 or more, the library must file Form 8282 with the IRS within 90 days of the sale or disposal.]

The library will use cash donations in a manner that will best serve its operation and its service to patrons. If cash donations are made with requests for specific materials to be purchased, the “Materials Selection and Collection Development Policy” will be used to determine if the purchase is appropriate for the library.

The director and the library board will decide whether to accept gifts of items other than materials or money, not covered by written policies. Gifts made to the library become the sole property of the library and remain so until they are either added to the collection or until a decision is made by the library administration about their appropriate use.

The Pittsburg Public Library adheres to the “Library Bill of Rights” and “Freedom to Read” statements, as well as the following interpretations: “Free Access to Libraries for Minors”, “Statement on Labeling”, “Expurgation of Library Materials”, and “Challenged Materials”. All of these are included as part of this policy.

When a patron requests that library materials be reconsidered, the following steps, which are based on the American Library Association's recommendations, will be followed:

1. The director or a designated department head will offer an in-person appointment to the person making the complaint, during which the general criteria of the library's selection policies will be explained. At that meeting, it will be made clear that the Library Board of Trustees subscribes to the freedom statements in the library's policy.
2. If the person making the complaint wants to continue the procedure for reconsideration of materials after talking with the director, he or she will be requested to complete a "Reconsideration of Library Materials" form. The person or group must be properly identified and the complaint form must be filled out in its entirety. (A copy of this form is included as part of this policy).
3. After the director receives the completed form, he/she will appoint a committee consisting of the director or a staff appointee of the director's choice, the person who recommended that the material be purchased, a board member, someone from the community who is a library user and a person selected by those making the complaint.
4. The process for reconsideration will be explained to those making the complaint and they will be informed that after the committee makes a recommendation, they will be notified.
5. If those making the complaint are not satisfied with the committee decision, they may appeal to the Board of Trustees within three weeks of the committee decision.
6. If the decision is appealed to the board, the material in question and all supporting information concerning the decision to purchase this material will be forwarded to the board. The board's decision will be final.

The library recognizes the need to continuously update its collections in response to the changing nature of its community, through the weeding and replacement of its titles. Weeding is a necessary adjunct of selection since it systematically eliminates unnecessary items; outdated or superseded materials; titles infrequently used, no longer of interest or in demand; unnecessary duplicates; and worn out or mutilated copies.

Questions asked when considering removing material include:

- What was the last date of circulation? What was the interval of time between checkouts?
- Is the book in attractive and useful condition?
- Are the information and presentation still accurate?
- Is it reliable? (Viewpoints and information change with time).
- Does it have appropriate language and usage? (Vocabulary and usage are a reflection of a particular time and place).
- Is it a duplicate?
- Is it appropriate material for this library at this time?