



Materials Selection Policy

The mission of the Barrington Public Library is to provide, without charge, diverse and easily accessible materials, services, and programs to educate, inform, enrich and entertain all the residents of Barrington and the greater community. The Barrington Public Library shall provide access to all users, and seek to make available the broadest possible spectrum of information and ideas in a variety of formats.

The Library observes the American Library Association policies regarding freedom of access, including the Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, Freedom to View (appended), and related statements contained in the Intellectual Freedom Manual. It upholds the principles of intellectual freedom, the citizen's right to information the right to confidentiality of users' records and opposes censorship.

Responsibility for Materials Selection

The legal responsibility for selecting materials lies with the Board of Trustees, which in turn delegates to the Library Director collection development and the selection of library materials on a day-to-day basis.

The Materials Selection Committee consists of the Director and the other members of the professional staff, and members of the Reference Department staff. Suggestions from other staff members and Library users are encouraged and seriously considered in the selection process.

Tools used in selection include professional and trade journals, newspapers, subject bibliographies, publishers' promotional materials, and reviews from other reliable sources.

Criteria for Selection

Certain objective criteria are used to build a diversified collection that supports the Library's mission. Each item must meet such of the following criteria as apply to its inclusion.

1. Current usefulness or permanent value.
2. Authority and competence of the author, composer, filmmaker, etc.
3. Relevance as a record of its time.
4. Its role in broadening or balancing the Library's materials on the same subject.
5. Relative importance in comparison with other works on the subject.

6. Quality of content, design, format or production.
7. Suitability of subject, style, format, and level for its intended audience.
8. Literary merit, significance.
9. Relevance to community needs.
10. Potential or known demand for the material.
11. Price.

The Use of the Library's Materials

Library materials shall be selected to provide a broad range of viewpoints, and shall not be marked or identified to show Library approval or disapproval of the contents. No book or other item shall be sequestered. Responsibility for the reading, viewing or listening habits of children rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection of materials for the Library's collections shall not be restricted by the possibility that children may obtain materials their parents consider inappropriate.

The use of rare, scholarly items or those which are fragile or of great value, or those unusually susceptible to theft, shall be controlled only to the extent required to protect them from damage or theft.

The Scope of the Collection

The Library shall seek to coordinate its resources with those of other libraries in Rhode Island so as not to duplicate service and materials unnecessarily. Just as the Barrington Public Library will collect in greater depth in some areas, so shall interlibrary loan services provide access to specialized and technical materials beyond the scope of this Library's collection.

The Library shall cooperate with school and academic libraries so that the services of these agencies may complement each other. The primary function of the school and academic libraries is to furnish curriculum-related materials. The public library shall seek to provide access to a less specialized but more comprehensive collection. Textbooks will not be purchased by the Library except in subjects in which materials in another format are not readily available.

The Library shall seek to identify groups of people with specialized information needs and to purchase materials they will be able to use — for example, literacy collections, and collections on health services for the aging.

The Library acknowledges a particular interest in local and state history and works of local authors.

Donations

All currently useful books and other materials donated to the Barrington Public Library shall be accepted, provided there are no conditions placed on use, location, or deselection.

The same criteria governing the selection of purchased materials will also apply to gifts.

The Library shall not be responsible for the appraisal of gifts for income tax or any other purposes.

Portraits, sculpture, furniture, objets d'art, and other such items shall not, except under special circumstances, be accepted as gifts.

Maintaining the Collection

To maintain an up-to-date, useful collection, worn and obsolete materials shall be continuously weeded. Materials may also be withdrawn if they are little used or superseded by a new edition or better work on the same subject. Materials no longer useful to the Library may be given to other libraries, sold for the benefit of the Library, or disposed of.

Reconsideration of Library Materials

Procedures have been developed for the reconsideration of materials to assure that objections or complaints will be handled in an attentive and consistent manner.

Patrons who request the reconsideration of Library materials shall be asked to put their request in writing by completing and signing the form appended to this policy, entitled "Request for Reconsideration of Library Material."

The Library Director, in consultation with material selectors, shall review the work in question. The selector shall obtain critical reviews of the work from professional journals, and shall read/view/listen to the work if it is unfamiliar to them. Following the criteria of the Book Selection Policy, they shall decide the disposition of the work, and the Director shall inform the patron of that decision. The patron shall be given an opportunity to discuss the work further if he/she wishes. If he/she is dissatisfied with the resolution, the patron may request that it be brought before the Board of Trustees, who will consider it be the same procedure.

Approved by the Library Board of Trustees
June 16, 1994
Reviewed October 2019