

Policy 7 - Collection Management

7-1 Purpose of the Library's Collection

In support of its mission, Wilmette Public Library District (the library) selects, organizes, preserves, and makes freely available resources which inform, educate, entertain, and enrich persons as individuals and as members of society.

Since no library can possibly acquire and share all resources, every library must employ a policy of selectivity in acquisitions and collection management. The library provides, within its financial and spatial limitations, a general collection of quality resources reflective of many perspectives and lived experiences. Included are works of enduring value and timely resources on current issues. Within the framework of these broad objectives, selection is based on community needs, both expressed and inferred from study of community demographics, and evidence of areas of interest in all formats for adults and young people alike.

The Board of Library Trustees (the board) recognizes that there is a broad range of interests among district residents. Therefore, the library's collection includes a variety of resources that present varying viewpoints on a diverse range of topics, including items that may be viewed as controversial by some members of the community. The library and the board resolve to protect the right to freely access information and resources from censorship and book banning, and seek to provide our community the opportunity to read and access information freely, as guaranteed by the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States.

The library and the board endorse the following American Library Association intellectual freedom statements, found in the Policy Appendices:

- Library Bill of Rights, Appendix 3C
- Freedom to Read Statement, Appendix 7A
- Freedom to View Statement, Appendix 7B
- Labels and Rating Systems, Appendix 7C

The library's print and digital resource collections will meet or exceed the Illinois State Library Standards for Public Library materials in accordance with the library's strategic planning priorities.

Other community resources and area library collections are also considered when selecting resources. The library is a member of the Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS), a multi-type system covering northern Illinois. Wilmette Public Library cardholders and Kenilworth residents holding cards from either the Wilmette or Winnetka-Northfield Public Libraries have access to resources in these libraries through cooperative agreement.

The library is a member of Cooperative Computer Services (CCS), a consortium of over 30 public libraries that share a computer system for circulation, cataloging, an online public access catalog, and interlibrary loan. Through interlibrary loan agreements, librarians may obtain resources for patrons from libraries in the metropolitan Chicago area, throughout the state of Illinois, and the United States. For digital resources, the library is also a member of the Electronic Content Consortium (ECC), which manages the Digital Library of Illinois, providing ebooks, eaudiobooks, and digital magazines to over 100 member libraries. Additional information may be obtained through electronic access of digital resources, including numerous specialized and technical databases.

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7-2 Responsibility for Collection Development

Authority and responsibility for library resource selection rests with the director, who operates within the framework of policies determined by the board. The library collection is managed by a team of professional librarians. The director may assign specific areas of the collection to staff for the selection, evaluation, maintenance, and withdrawal of resources. This delegation of collection management tasks does not remove collection management responsibilities from the director.

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7-3 Selection of Resources

Staff select and evaluate resources using a variety of criteria. All criteria need not be met for acquisition and can vary based on individual titles, formats, languages, and age levels. The criteria include, but are not limited to:

- Accuracy, currency, and authoritativeness of information presented
- Artistic and literary merit, and awards of recognition
- Availability from library vendors and distributors
- Availability of cataloging records
- Existing and anticipated demand and relevance to the community
- General interest and appeal
- Holdings of other libraries in the north suburban Chicago area
- Physical limitations of space to appropriately house the resources
- Price of resources and budget for collections
- Relevance of format and compatibility with technological advances
- Representation of various interests and viewpoints
- Resources that fit the library's strategic plan and service priorities
- Suitability of subject, style, and format for the intended audience

Tools used in selection include, but are not limited to, professional journals, trade journals, online resources, publishers' promotional materials, and reviews from reputable sources. Purchase suggestions from patrons are welcome and given serious consideration.

In addition, the following guidelines are provided to aid staff in resource selection decisions:

- Personal biases must not influence acquisitions and collection management
- Resources will not be excluded from the collection due to the race, nationality, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, mental or physical ability, or political, moral, or religious beliefs of any author or contributor to a work, nor will resources be proscribed or removed from the collection due to doctrinal or partisan disapproval
- Resources are judged on the basis of their content and style as a whole, not by selected portions or passages
- Resources of contemporary significance and of long-standing value will be selected ensuring an overall balance in the collection
- The overall value of a resource must be considered in relation to all resources currently provided while serving the interests of patrons
- Selection will not be inhibited by the possibility that resources may come into the possession of children. It is the responsibility of a parent or guardian to monitor and oversee their children's reading, viewing, and/or listening
- The library does not actively acquire textbooks or other curriculum-related materials, except as such materials also serve the general public, and where few or no resources are available in any other form
- Medical, scientific, and legal works will be acquired only to the extent that they are useful to the general public
- The library routinely acquires commercially published resources, and may also acquire self-published books as appropriate to the library's selection criteria

In addition to the criteria used in selecting physical formats, additional considerations for databases, digital, and downloadable formats include: licensing, ease of use, technology requirements, and availability of remote access. Some digital resources include a range of content that is leased or purchased as a whole, while other platforms allow staff to select specific content.

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7-4 Evaluation and Maintenance of the Collection

With the exception of resources related to local history, Wilmette Public Library is not a library of historical record. The collection is routinely reviewed and evaluated in order to maintain its usefulness, currency, and relevance. Items may be kept, redistributed, repurchased, withdrawn, or preserved.

Factors considered in the evaluation of resources include, but are not limited to:

- Anticipation of continuing and changing community interests and needs
- Availability of resources in other formats
- Budget and/or cost per use
- Holdings of other libraries in the north suburban Chicago area
- Inclusion in standard bibliographies or recommended lists
- Insufficient use or lack of patron demand
- Obsolete content that is no longer timely, accurate, or relevant
- Physical condition
- Physical limitations of library facilities
- Professional judgment and principles of collection management
- Publication date
- Student and local school curriculum support
- Suitability of subject, style, and format for the intended audience

Following evaluation by the above criteria, resources are regularly chosen to be withdrawn from the collection and information about those items is removed from the catalog of holdings.

Materials in acceptable physical condition with potential resale value are offered to the Friends of the Wilmette Public Library for inclusion in their used materials fundraisers or donated to help support library and literacy initiatives of partners. Other items are recycled or discarded.

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7-5 Local and Self-Published Authors

The library maintains a “Local Authors Shelf” for resources written or created by residents of the Wilmette and Kenilworth area. Resources in this collection may not meet all of the selection criteria of our collection.

- Items will be accepted as donations from the author or publisher and evaluated for inclusion in the collection by the librarian responsible for that genre or subject area.

- Items will be included based on condition, appropriate format, and perceived demand or interest by the library's community.
- Items may be withdrawn depending on demand and established evaluation criteria.
- All donated items become the property of the library and will not be returned to the donor.
- Items that are not accepted into the collection will be given to the Friends of the Wilmette Public Library for inclusion in their used materials fundraisers or donated to help support library and literacy initiatives of partners.
- Staff may not be able to meet with individual authors, nor notify donors whether items are or are not added to the collection.

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7-6 Labeling of Resources

The library encourages exploration of its collections and will not engage in labeling practices that discourage this exploration. Library labeling practices align with guidance provided in the American Library Association's Statements on Labeling and Rating Systems (Appendix 7C). Because labeling decisions can have broad-ranging and sometimes unanticipated impacts, staff should consult with the director whenever questions on labeling arise, and before initiating changes in labeling practice.

Labels can provide a convenient tool to assist the public in locating resources within the collection. While this convenience may be valuable to a particular group of users, it is also important to consider the impact of labeling practices on the community as a whole.

Some of the items in the physical and digital audiovisual collections have been assigned ratings by various external groups, such as the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA). The producer or distributor of a particular item may or may not have chosen to receive a rating or include such rating on the item itself. To the extent that rating information is present on an item as acquired, the library neither obliterates such information nor adds an additional rating label. When such rating information is absent from an item, the library does not assign a rating or add a rating label, even when an MPAA or other rating appears to have been assigned through a ratings system. For example, an MPAA-rated film is often bundled with non-rated features and bonus materials for distribution. In such a case, the film rating can become misleading with respect to the entire contents of the item, causing the distributor to omit a rating on the item as sold or licensed.

The library remains committed to assisting patrons in obtaining information requested to aid with their own selection of resources, including access to rating information when available. However, such assistance shall not extend to altering an item's appearance

through a rating label or other means to reflect the judgment of others on the appropriateness of that item for any individual or group of patrons.

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7-7 Arrangement and Presentation of Resources

A variety of factors influence the arrangement and shelving of resources within the library facilities. These factors include, but are not limited to, physical space and shelving restrictions, promotional considerations, security issues, user convenience, and logical and coherent presentation. Resources will be arranged and shelved in a manner that is viewpoint neutral and does not convey endorsement or disapproval by the library.

Arrangement and presentation of resources should not be used to restrict access or to suggest moral or doctrinal endorsement. Resources may be shelved in areas that are not accessible to the public to protect the collection or because of space considerations. However, the library will not place resources in areas that are not accessible to the public based on a value judgment that the content, language or themes of the resource, or the background or views of the author(s) of the resource render it inappropriate or offensive for all or certain groups of users. Young people under the age of 18 have free access to resources in the library's collections, and parents or guardians may choose to advise their children in making appropriate selections.

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7-8 Donations for Resources

The library welcomes gifts to the collection, and accepts them with the understanding that it has the right to handle and dispose of them in the best interest of the library. Such material may be added to the collection provided that it meets the library's selection criteria and cataloging standards. Items without ISBNs or readily available cataloging may not be added to the collection.

Monetary gifts may be designated to purchase resources as memorials and honoraria. While donors of such funds may suggest subjects or specific titles to be acquired with their donation, the library reserves the right of final selection of titles that will enhance the collections and meet the library's selection criteria. An appropriate bookplate may be placed in items purchased from donated funds.

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7-9 Patron Requests for Additions to the Collection

Patrons may request resources for the library to purchase by completing the *Suggest a Purchase* form on the library's website or a *Wilmette Public Library Comment Form* available at all library service desks.

All requests are evaluated by either the manager of the department in which the request would be placed and/or the selector of that subject area. Not all requested items will be ordered for the collection. All requests must meet the resource selection criteria. If a request is denied, the patron will be notified via a letter or email stating that the library will not be purchasing the item.

Items not currently available in the library's collections may be available by interlibrary loan.

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7-10 Patron Requests for Reconsideration of Resources

The library and the board resolve to protect the right to freely access information and resources from censorship and book banning, and seek to provide our community the opportunity to read and access information freely, as guaranteed by the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States.

It is not the policy of the board to exclude information and resources, or to arbitrarily remove resources from the collection due to pressure from any individual or organization.

Any resident or taxpayer of the Wilmette Public Library District has the right to question the inclusion of or exclusion of any title in the collections. Patrons may request that selection decisions be reconsidered in the following ways:

1. Informal comments may be made to staff in the appropriate department at any time. Such comments will be conveyed to the appropriate department manager and selector for the subject area of the item in question, but no formal action will necessarily be taken.
2. A patron may request to speak with the appropriate department manager. A meeting time will be arranged that is convenient for both the patron and department manager. The patron will be offered copies of the *Collection Management Policy* which details the use of the *Resource Reconsideration Form* (*Appendix 7D*). No formal action will necessarily be taken.

3. If a patron wishes to express their comments in a formal manner, the following procedure will be used:
 - a. The patron will be given a copy of the *Collection Management Policy* and a *Resource Reconsideration Form*. The patron will fill out the form and return it to the Administrative Office of the library.
 - b. A copy of the completed form will be given to the appropriate department manager and the selector of that subject area for formal review. A copy will also be forwarded to the director.
 - c. Following formal review, the department manager will send the decision in writing to the patron within 60 days of receipt of the completed *Resource Reconsideration Form*.
 - d. If further review is requested by the patron, the patron will be invited to meet with a committee consisting of the director, the department manager, and appropriate selector(s). After the meeting, the committee will respond in writing to the patron explaining what actions are being taken with regard to the item in question.
 - e. If further review is requested by the patron, the board will handle the matter directly as a body or may refer the matter to an advisory committee for recommendation. This committee would consist of two board members appointed by the board president, and two staff members appointed by the director.

In making its decision, the board will carefully consider the principles articulated in the Collection Management Policy and will allow ample opportunity for both staff and patron input. The board's final decision will be conveyed in writing to the patron within 60 days of referral to the board.

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