

DECATUR PUBLIC LIBRARY

MATERIAL SELECTION AND COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

- I. Decatur Public Library's primary function is to provide materials to meet the informational, educational, cultural, and recreational needs of the residents of the city of Decatur. As a community institution, the library is dedicated to the concept of service to everyone. A fundamental part of this service is the selection, acquisition, organization, circulation and promotion of appropriate materials.

Free and convenient access to the world of ideas, information and creative experience is of vital importance to every citizen. Therefore, the Decatur Public Library Board of Trustees recognizes and incorporates as part of this policy the principles of the American Library Association Library Bill of Rights (addendum #1), the Freedom to Read Statement (addendum #2), and the Freedom to View Statement (addendum #3).

- II. Selection of materials for the library collections is based upon four factors:

- A. Mission of the Library

1. In accordance with this mission, the Decatur Public Library staff will select, acquire and organize materials in all media in order to:
 - a. Meet the individual's needs for information.
 - b. Help the individual attain maximum self-development through life-long intellectual and cultural growth.
 - c. Supplement both formal and informal educational experiences of individuals.
 - d. Provide practical and vocational information that will improve occupational capabilities.
 - e. Stimulate thoughtful participation of the individual in the life of the family, the community and the world.
 - f. Serve as a resource center for the informational, educational and recreational needs of the community.
 - g. Serve as a storehouse of knowledge for both the research and cultural needs of the community.

- h. Allow the library to assume an active role within the community.
- i. [Document and DELETE] Preserve local community information and history.

B. The community as a factor in selection.

In order to serve the community, the public library must have knowledge of the nature of the community and the needs of the people it serves, both individually and collectively. The library must be aware of the availability of resources in other community agencies. Therefore, the library desires to cooperate as fully as possible with:

1. Local businesses and industries, since they play an important role in Decatur's economic growth and development.
2. Local libraries, library systems and their members and the State Library, to provide the best library service while [avoiding DELETE] minimizing duplication of services and resources.
3. Local agencies, groups and organizations whose purposes and activities are related to library objectives.
4. The educational community by providing materials which supplement and enrich the information, research and recreational needs of students of all ages.

C. Selection based upon clientele to be served.

The selection of materials for clientele will be based upon the following guidelines:

1. Material should be of immediate or anticipated interest to individuals or groups in the community.
2. Subject coverage should be as broad in scope as the interests of the community and, within the constraints of budgetary considerations, provide such variety and depth as demand may indicate.
3. Materials should meet acceptable standards with respect to content, expression and manufacture, according to the clientele served.

4. Non-print material shall be acquired to illustrate and extend the value of printed materials in the library and to increase the general usefulness of the library to all segments of the community.
5. Materials will also be selected for the visually and physically impaired, individuals with learning impairments, adult new readers, and [people for whom English is not the primary language. DELETE] materials in English for those for whom English is a second language.
6. Requests by the public will be given serious consideration.
7. The children's collection will provide materials which anticipate and meet the diversified needs, interest, tasks, and backgrounds of boys and girls from infancy through age twelve. These materials should provide enjoyment and inspiration, and cultivate in children a love of books and reading, help children know more about themselves and their world, and meet their personal informational needs. Children are not limited to material in the juvenile collection, although juvenile collections are kept together to facilitate use. Responsibility for materials selected by a child must rest with his or her parents or guardian, not the library.
8. The purpose of the young adult collection is to provide a wide range of materials that can be used for life-long pleasure and interest in reading and to introduce adolescents (age 13 or older) to the world of adult literature. This collection is for browsing rather than for reference and is designed for the self-motivated individual.

D. Selection Criteria

Each type of material placed in the Library must be considered in terms of its own kind of excellence and the audience for whom it is intended. The addition of any item to the library collection in no way represents an endorsement by the library of any theory, idea or policy contained in it.

There is no single standard which can be applied in all cases when making a selection decision. Some materials may be judged primarily in terms of artistic merit, scholarship, and/or their value as human expression; others are selected to satisfy the recreational and entertainment needs of the community.

A well-rounded collection of materials which serves a broad spectrum of users must provide the widest possible selection of print and non-print formats. Therefore, the library will develop collections of materials in [the following DELETE] formats that may include: books, newspapers, periodicals, maps, government documents, audio recordings, art reproductions, videoforms, and microforms. Other developing types of materials will be acquired and made accessible as they are judged suitable, meaningful, and relevant to the community.

1. Criteria for the selection of materials will be based on the:

- a. Suitability of physical form for library use
- b. Suitability of subject and style for intended audience
- c. Present and potential relevance to community needs
- d. Appropriateness and effectiveness of medium to content
- e. Insight into human and social conditions
- f. Importance as a document of the times
- g. Relation to existing collection and other material on subject
- h. Skill, competence, and purpose of the author
- i. Reputation and significance of the author
- j. Cost
- k. Demand

2. Criteria for Evaluation of Works of Information & Opinion (Non-fiction)

- a. Authority
- b. Comprehensiveness and depth of treatment
- c. Objectivity
- d. Clarity, accuracy, and logic of presentation

e. All sides of controversial issues will be covered, subject to the availability of appropriate material

3. Criteria for Evaluation of Works of Imagination (Fiction)

a. Sustains reader interest

b. Vitality and originality

c. Artistic presentation

d. Effective characterization

e. Authenticity of historical or social setting

f. Representative of important genres, trends, or national culture

III. Gifts

Decatur Public Library encourages and accepts gifts and donations, with the understanding that materials will be added to the collection only if they meet the same criteria for selection used for purchased materials. The donor of any gift materials must understand that the library in all instances reserves the right to assign gifts wherever need exists and to dispose of gifts as it sees fit, if they are not acceptable library materials or are not needed in the library's collection.

IV. Withdrawals

It is recognized that materials which become useless due to a lack of demand, obsolete subject matter, poor format, or physical condition will be withdrawn from the collection.

V. Request for Purchase Consideration

Patrons are encouraged to fill out a request for purchase consideration for materials not owned by the library (addendum #4). Each request will be carefully reviewed using the material selection criteria. Patrons who desire a reply to their request will be notified.

VI. Reconsideration of Library Material

If a city resident or [a Decatur Public] Library card-holder objects to any library material, a request for the reconsideration of material should be made in writing on the form provided (addendum #5). Following receipt of a formal com-

plaint, the City Librarian will appoint an ad hoc committee of staff librarians to review the title in question and report their findings within one month, so that the City Librarian may be better informed in order to make a decision regarding the retention of the item and respond to the complaint. The City Librarian shall include in the monthly report to the Library Board information on any formal complaints and his decision. The complainant will be notified in writing of the City Librarian's decision.

In the event that the decision of the City Librarian to keep a specific item does not satisfy the individual making the complaint, the Library Board adopts the statement on non-removal of challenged materials. This statement (addendum #6) provides legal recourse through the courts and states that the Library Board will abide by any appropriate judicial decision which may be rendered.

VII. Responsibility for Selection

Using the criteria listed above, materials are reviewed and selected by a material selection committee appointed by the City Librarian. The selection procedure is supervised and coordinated by the [Assistant City Librarian DELETE] Head of the Adult Division, but final responsibility for selection resides with the City Librarian.