

Purpose

The purpose of the Forbush Memorial Library Materials Selection Policy is to establish guidelines for the enhancement of the collection of library materials. The purpose of the collection is to meet the informational and recreational needs of Westminster's residents, to enable a well-informed citizenry and to enhance personal development.

Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the Library Director to oversee the selection of library materials. The Library Director may delegate aspects of selection to appropriate members of the staff.

General selection policy

The library selects materials in accordance with guidelines stated by the American Library Association in its [Library Bill of Rights](#), [Freedom to Read](#) and [Freedom to View](#) statements.

The selection of library materials is based upon quality, appropriateness for a publicly held collection, and responsiveness to the changing needs of Westminster residents. Materials are considered as complete works, and not based on a particular passage or passages. A work shall not be excluded solely because it represents a particular aspect of life, frankness of expression, or controversial content. All acquisitions, whether purchased or donated, will be evaluated by the following standards:

1. Present or future relevance to the community's needs
2. Suitability of format, subject, style, or reading/viewing level for the intended audience
3. Reputation or significance of the author/producer/publisher
4. Positive reviews from critics or staff members
5. Positive review(s) in one or more professional publications such as (but not limited to) Library Journal, Publishers Weekly etc.
6. Within the limits of current budgets
7. Relationship to the existing collection, enhancement of a specific part of the collection, or where insufficient materials are available on the same subject
8. Author or illustrator is local
9. High literary or artistic merit
10. Accuracy of content
11. In demand by library patrons

An item need not meet all criteria to be acceptable, nor will any single criterion be decisive.

Materials selection policies by collection

1. Reference (print and electronic): To develop this non-circulating print and electronic collection to meet the informational needs of Westminster residents and to maintain a size easily managed by the reference staff. Specific criteria for electronic resources include ease of use, timeliness of updates, licensing restrictions, technical support, and hardware/software requirements.

2. Periodicals (print and electronic): To supplement materials in the adult, young adult, and children's collections with very current content. Periodicals are intended to be more frequently updated than other print materials. Specific criteria for periodicals include ease of use, timeliness of subject matter, and licensing restrictions.
3. Special Collections: To highlight the history of the community, the library collects printed material and artifacts including artwork of special or unique value to Westminster and the surrounding area. Acceptance of special, non-circulating collection items must be (but are not limited to) material such as local histories of Westminster, surrounding towns, Massachusetts, and New England; genealogical records pertaining to Westminster families; writing by local authors; or objects or artwork historically related to the region. To be accepted as gifts, objects or art works must be voted by the Forbush Library Board of Trustees and acceptance is based in part on donor restrictions, availability of funds and storage space to care for gifts.
4. Media Collection: To meet the needs of Westminster residents by providing informational and recreational materials in non-print format such as DVDs, audio books, music CDs, and a limited number of video tapes. Special selection criteria in both the adult and children's collections include cost and space considerations, contributions to a balance and range of information, as well as emphasis on instructional, educational, and informational topics. Some audio books will enhance the print collection. Films may include those that are critically acclaimed or award-winning, animated, and classic Hollywood films as well as those made by local film makers.
5. Children's and Young Adult Collections: To provide materials in various formats to meet the needs of children for recreational, informational, and self-educational use, as well as to supplement formal education curriculums. Criteria for the selection of young adult and children's materials include that which is critically reviewed, works by children's and young adult authors, editors, and illustrators of high reputation, and material that will encourage reading at all levels. This collection is primarily a circulating collection except for reference sources used by the Children's Room staff.
6. Other: To augment the collection, other types of materials, such as games, themed kits, telescope, educator kits, etc. may be added as space and budget allows.

Collection maintenance

As materials become dated, damaged, worn, or lost, staff will decide if items are withdrawn or replaced using the following criteria:

1. Is the item still available for purchase or held in affiliated library collections?
2. Might another item, format, or updated version better serve the same purpose?
3. Does the item have local historical value or is it a classic that should be replaced?
4. As newer items are added to the collection, available space must be taken into consideration as a criterion in evaluating older little-used materials in the collection.

Requests for reconsideration of library materials

The Board of Trustees and staff of the Forbush Memorial Library support intellectual freedom and subscribe to the principles of the American Library Association's [Library Bill of Rights](#), [Freedom to Read](#) and [Freedom to View](#) statements. The library staff applies the criteria for selecting materials as described in the Materials Selection Policy to provide materials that reflect a diversity of viewpoints within the community. **It is also the Board of Trustees' policy that parents or legal guardians are the only persons who have the right to determine the appropriateness of their children's reading/viewing habits.**

Patrons may nominate books or other materials to add to or to be removed from the collection. When a request for consideration is made, this procedure is followed:

1. A staff member explains the selection policy. The patron may submit a written Request for Consideration of Library Resources Form to the Library Director.
2. The completed form is reviewed by the staff and the Library Director to ensure the selection criteria were met. The Library Director shall respond in writing to the patron within 14 (fourteen) to 30 (thirty) days and notify the Board of Trustees of each Request for Reconsideration submitted.
3. If the requestor is not satisfied with the library staff's decision, they may appeal in writing to the Library Director, who then convenes a Reconsideration Committee within 30 days of the date of the appeal. This committee shall consist of a trustee who shall be named as chair, two members of the library staff responsible for material selection, and two members of the community selected by a majority of the Board of Trustees.
4. In reviewing the Request for Reconsideration, the Reconsideration Committee employs the selection criteria (described above) and considers other information including professional reviews and recommendations, comments from library staff, and comments from the requestor. During the reconsideration period, items under consideration will not be added to or withdrawn from the collection.
5. Within 30 days of the Reconsideration Committee's review, the committee will recommend what action to take to the Library Director, who will reach a decision and inform the requestor and the committee in writing of that decision.
6. Should the requestor wish to appeal the decision, they may make a final appeal in writing within seven days directly to the Board of Trustees. They will schedule a public hearing with 30 days of the final written appeal to reach a final decision by majority vote.

Request a purchase of library materials

Is there a new title you think we may have missed? Suggest a purchase for the collection using the Request to Purchase an Item Form.