



Material Selection Policy
ADOPTED DATE 2/11/1988
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REVISION # 7.1

# LIBRARY POLICY

## Material Selection Policy

### PURPOSE

To clarify the guiding principles used when making collection development decisions.

### POLICY

The Board of Trustees of the Frankfort Public Library District has adopted the American Library Association's (ALA) Library Bill of Rights and the American Library Association's Freedom to Read and Freedom to View Statements. (See Appendices A, B, & C)

It is the goal of the Frankfort Public Library District ("FPLD") to meet the informational, educational, cultural, inspirational, and recreational needs of District residents. The Library recognizes the needs of the community are of primary importance in selection. This is a diverse community and each individual's needs will be considered in conjunction with the needs of the community as a whole.

The Frankfort Public Library is affiliated with the Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS), SWAN Consortium, and OCLC WorldShare. In conjunction with these entities, the Library utilizes an interlibrary loan system to meet patrons' requests where budgetary restraints or limited appeal prohibits addition of the materials to the collection.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE LIBRARY'S COLLECTIONS:

- To provide lifelong learning opportunities, stimulate self-understanding, enhance job-related skills, and make available entertaining reading, listening, and viewing materials.
- To help people know more about themselves, to know more about others, to know more about the world, and to function effectively as members of society.
- To provide access to a variety of opinions on matters of current interest and encourage freedom of expression.
- To support educational, civic, and cultural activities within the Frankfort community; to provide connections and resources to community organizations and government agencies.
- To maintain a physical collection in a variety of formats, when possible.
- To maintain a virtual collection of resources that is accessible twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

### BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES:

It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees of the Frankfort Public Library District to review and approve this Material Selection Policy. The Board is responsible for protecting the rights of the Library user and ultimately answering any and all questions regarding the policy and preservation of an individual's right to know.

Specific selection, ordering, maintenance, and withdrawal of all library materials shall be delegated by the Board of Trustees to the Library Director.

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### **LIBRARY STAFF RESPONSIBILITY:**

Under the Library Director's direction, members of the professional staff who are qualified by training may participate in selection, ordering, maintenance, and withdrawal of library materials.

The collection is designed to meet the needs of the Frankfort Public Library District patrons. It is the duty of the staff to acquire materials which meet these needs even though the materials may present views contrary to the personal beliefs of staff members, Library board members, community organizations, or individuals. In accordance with Illinois law, no employee may be disciplined or dismissed for the selection of Library materials when the selection is made in good faith and in accordance with this written Materials Selection Policy (75 ILCS 5/4-7.2).

All members of the staff, Library Trustees, and District residents may recommend titles for purchase. All requests will be given serious consideration. An attempt will be made to borrow through interlibrary loan any requested item which is out of print or that the Library determines does not meet the criteria for purchase.

### **PARAMETERS OF COLLECTION:**

To meet the informational and recreational needs of its diverse community, the Library must build and maintain a well-balanced collection of print and non-print materials. All different types of format will be considered when selecting materials, taking into consideration possible future technological advances. It shall be the policy of this Library to provide materials in whatever format will best meet the needs of the community.

### **STANDARDS FOR SELECTION:**

Selection of books and/or other Library materials shall be made on the basis of their value to interest, enlighten, and inform all people of the Library District. The addition of the item to the collection does not represent an endorsement by the Library of any theory, idea, or policy contained in it. No library material shall be excluded because of the race, disability, gender, cultural or sexual orientation, nationality, religious, political, or social views and any other class protected by law of the creator.

Selection of materials is influenced by:

- Patron demand, whether expressed or anticipated.
- The changing needs and interests of the community.
- Relevance, both current and historical, and permanent value to the existing collection.
- Intrinsic value or quality of work, relating to such considerations as factual accuracy and authoritativeness of content, comprehensiveness of treatment, style, clarity, effectiveness of expression, and creativity.
- Professional judgment, along with input garnered from critical reviews and selection sources.
- Credentials of the creator, editor, or publisher.
- Importance of a work in adding balance to or filling gaps in the collection.
- Availability of the same or similar material at neighboring libraries or through interlibrary loan.
- Budgetary and space considerations.
- Suitability of the material format for library use, including quality and durability.
- Availability of the item for purchase.

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The Library staff selects a general representative collection for all ages at a variety of reading levels, but the collection is also attuned to the specific needs of the community. Multiple copies of a title may be purchased if there is adequate patron demand.

The Library’s selection of materials is not restricted by the possibility that children and adolescents may obtain items that parents consider inappropriate. The decision as to what a minor may read, view, or listen to is the responsibility of that individual’s parent or guardian.

**GIFTS:**

The Frankfort Public Library District is unable to accept donations of materials for its circulating collections. Such donations will be referred to the Friends of the Frankfort Library for inclusion in their ongoing book sale.

Patrons interested in making a monetary donation specifically for book purchases in memorial or in honor of named individuals can do so through our Commemorative Book Program.

For additional information about donations, please refer to the “Donation Policy.”

**WITHDRAWAL AND DISPOSAL OF LIBRARY MATERIALS:**

The collection of the Frankfort Public Library District will be evaluated by the professional staff in order to maintain a useful collection that meets the needs of the community. This activity should be done regularly in order to find areas that need to be strengthened as well as to identify materials that need to be withdrawn. The withdrawal of Library materials (weeding) is an integral part of the collection maintenance and helps assure the Library’s usefulness and vitality. Library staff use much of the same criteria used in the selection process. Additional considerations include, but are not limited to:

- Damage or wear and tear of item
- Diminished interest to the community
- Contents superseded by new editions or more relevant works on the same subject
- Outdated or inaccurate contents
- Format is outdated or no longer viable

Gifts, memorials, and donated items may be withdrawn from the collection as part of the weeding process. In all instances, the Library reserves the right to dispose of those items as it would any other material.

Withdrawn materials may be given to another library, offered to the Friends of the Library for sale, sold, given to local philanthropic, educational, cultural, governmental, or other not-for-profit organizations, or discarded. Withdrawn materials will not be saved for specific persons.

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### RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS:

Any District resident who wishes to question why materials were selected or were not selected will be referred to the Library Director and designated selectors. They will also be provided with a copy of the Library’s Materials Selection Policy. If the matter is not resolved after a discussion, they are invited to submit a “Request for Reconsideration of Library Material” form. The form will be submitted to the Library Director for further consideration, and may be referred to additional staff members for an in-depth review. The Library Director will notify the patron of the outcome.

In the event that the patron wants to further pursue the complaint, the Library Director shall bring the matter to the attention of the Library Board of Trustees for its consideration. The patron will be advised of the Board’s decision in writing. The decision of the Board of Trustees on reconsideration of material is final.

Until this process has been completed, no removal or restriction of material undergoing review shall take place. Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents, nor will items be sequestered, except for the purpose of protecting them from damage or theft.

## APPENDIX A- LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person’s right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people’s privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019. Inclusion of “age” reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

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## APPENDIX B- ALA FREEDOM TO READ STATEMENT

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.

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Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the

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inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

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This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.

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## APPENDIX C- ALA FREEDOM TO VIEW STATEMENT

The FREEDOM TO VIEW, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore these principles are affirmed:

1. To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association (formerly the Educational Film Library Association) and was adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.

Endorsed January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council