

The Brookfield Library

Policy 500: Materials Selection Policy

Section 1: Purpose

The purposes of this policy are:

1. The development and maintenance of a well-balanced collection of the best and most useful materials available to meet the needs of the community, within the limits imposed by funds and space;
2. To provide guidance for materials selectors on the staff;
3. To inform the public regarding the principles upon which library materials selections are made;
4. To answer questions regarding the presence or absence of specific materials;
5. To ensure continued growth of the collection appropriate to the library's defined mission;
6. To provide a method for registering and responding to public complaints regarding the content of the library's collection.

Section 2: The Mission Of The Library

The Brookfield Library is a free-access, non-sectarian, and politically-neutral public library. Its mission is to serve as the information center for the Town of Brookfield. To fulfill this role, the library provides timely, accurate, and useful materials, services, and programs to meet the information needs of Brookfield residents, and to satisfy their leisure-time reading interests.

Special emphasis is placed on: providing current, high-demand, high-interest materials; stocking timeless classics of fiction and nonfiction; providing materials that support students at all academic levels; and on stimulating the appreciation of books, reading, and learning in persons of all ages.

Efforts are made to respond to the changing needs and interests of the community and to implement technologies that provide information and services efficiently and effectively

The library also serves as a resource for continuing self-education, literacy training, and community information for the Town of Brookfield.

Section 3: Professional Endorsements

The Library Board of Trustees supports the concept of intellectual freedom and has adopted the following statements as policy: the American Library Association (ALA) *Library Bill of Rights, Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights*, the ALA *Freedom To Read Statement*, and the *Freedom to View* statement of the American Film and Video

Association. The Library Board affirms that free and unrestricted access to information contained in the library collection is a basic tenet of its operation.

Section 4: Definitions

The words “library materials,” “collection items,” “materials,” “items,” and other synonyms as they may appear in this policy refer to all forms of recorded communication, from the traditional printed formats to any developments in non-print media.

The word “selection” refers to the decision that must be made either to add materials to the collection or to retain materials already in the collection.

Section 5: Types Of Materials

Subject to the limitations imposed by funds and space, the collection of The Brookfield Library will be developed to include some or all of the following materials:

1. Print materials, including, but not limited to, books, magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, and college catalogs.
2. Audio-visual materials, including but not limited to audiorecordings, books on tape or compact disc, music or spoken words on compact discs, and videorecordings in currently available formats..
3. Microformed materials, including both microfilm and microfiche.
4. Computerized resources, including online electronic information databases, downloadable audiobooks and e-books, and computer software, and other formats to be developed.
5. Passes to museums, planetariums, and other informational and educational facilities.
6. Other types of materials may be added to the library collection from time to time, as developed, and subject to budgetary and space limitations.

Library materials will be assigned to one of three (3) broad categories into which the library collection will be organized:

1. Children’s materials: those most appropriate to library users from early childhood through seventh grade.
2. Young Adult materials: those most appropriate to library users from sixth through twelfth grades.
3. Adult materials: those most appropriate to library users from eighth grade and beyond.

Section 6: Responsibility For Selection

The authority and responsibility for establishing materials selection policy lies with the Library Board of Trustees.

The authority and responsibility for the selection of library materials are delegated by the trustees to the Library Director and, under his or her direction, to the staff who are qualified for this activity by reason of training and/or experience.

Materials selection is to be carried out within the framework of the policies determined by the Library Board.

Section 7: Guidelines For Selection

It would be impossible for the library staff to examine every item under consideration for purchase by the library. Therefore, reviews in professionally-recognized periodicals are a primary source for materials selection. Standard bibliographies, booklists by recognized authorities, and the advice of competent people in specific subject areas also are used. In addition, materials selection is based in part on the professional knowledge and judgment of the library staff, who are acquainted with the strengths and weaknesses of existing collections and with community needs. Suggestions from non-selecting library staff and readers are also welcome.

Criteria used in the selection process include, but are not limited to, the following:

General:

- Reputation, skill, competence, and purpose of the originator of the work
- Opinion of critics, reviewers, and the public
- Suitability of physical format for library use
- Suitability of subject and style for intended audience
- Present and potential relevance to community needs
- Importance as a record of the times
- Relationship to the existing collection and other materials on the subject
- Enhances a specific collection in the library
- Insufficient materials available on the same subject
- Price of the item, and availability of funds
- Popular demand
- Positive review in one or more appropriate professional journals
- Insight into human and social conditions
- Author, illustrator, or performer is local

Nonfiction: Specific to Works of Information and Opinion

- Authority
- Comprehensiveness and depth of treatment
- Objectivity
- Clarity, accuracy, and logic of presentation
- Representation of varying points of view
- Permanent value as resource material

Fiction: Specific to Works of Imagination:

- Vitality and originality
- Artistic presentation

- Sustained interest
- Effective characterization
- Authenticity of historical or social setting
- Representation of important movement, genre, or trend of national culture

The purchase of nonbook materials will be governed by the same principles and criteria as are applied to book purchases.

Section 8: Suggestions From Library Users

Request forms will be provided by the library for patrons who wish to suggest specific items for inclusion in the library collection.

Consideration will be given to purchasing items suggested by library patrons. The same criteria for selection applied to other library purchases will be applied to the selection of materials suggested by library patrons

Section 9: Balance And Neutrality

The inclusion of an item in the Library's collection in no way implies endorsement of its author, contents or views. Furthermore, the exclusion of an item does not imply disapproval. The Library recognizes that tastes vary widely in a given community, and an item which is pleasing to one borrower may be unacceptable to another; however, no one person or group has the right to impose standards on other members of the public. Decisions are not made on the basis of any anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the work in relation to the building of the collection that will serve the interests of the public. Materials will be provided which appeal to library users of all backgrounds, ages and interests, and will be equally available. Responsibility for children's use of library materials rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection is not inhibited by the possibility that materials may be accessible to use by children.

Section 10: Textbooks

Providing textbooks and curriculum materials is generally held to be the responsibility of the schools. Instead, the library will provide supplementary materials of various kinds to enrich the resources available to students and teachers. Selection of materials for the children's collection should not be made to duplicate school texts, but rather should consider the usefulness of the item for general library purposes.

Textbooks may be purchased for the collection only if they are considered the best available material on a given subject.

Section 11: Potentially Offensive Materials

The library has the responsibility to acquire, organize, and make available a representative selection of materials on subjects of interest to its users, including materials on various sides of controversial issues. A variety and balance of opinion will be sought whenever available. Thus, the library will be a resource where the individual can examine issues freely and make his or her own decision

The library recognizes that some materials may be controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons. Nevertheless, materials selection will not be made on the basis of any anticipated approval or disapproval, but rather upon the basis of anticipated usage, the merit of the item, its relationship to the overall collection, and the anticipated interest of library users

The library staff will not mark or identify materials to show approval or disapproval of the contents, and no cataloged item will be separated from the general collection except for the purpose of protecting it from damage or theft

Section 12: Responsibility For Materials Choices Made By Minors

The responsibility for approving or rejecting the choice of library materials made by minors rests with their parents or legal guardians alone. It is neither the right nor the responsibility of the library staff to permit or forbid a minor to borrow a specific item.

The Brookfield Library's Circulation Policy states "It is the policy of The Brookfield Library that parents or guardians, *not* the library staff or trustees, are responsible for monitoring and approving the selection of materials made by children. It is the parents or guardians – and *only these* – who may restrict their children – and only *their* children – from access to library materials and services. Parents or guardians who wish their children not have access to certain materials or services should so advise their children, as the responsibility of the library staff and trustees is to provide free and equal access to library materials and services to all library users.

In fairness to all library users, selection of materials for the adult collection will not be restricted by the possibility that items may inadvertently be read or borrowed by children

Section 13: Weeding

The Library will maintain an up-to-date, attractive, and useful collection by retaining or replacing essential materials, and by removing, on a systematic and

continuous basis, those items that are damaged, mutilated, outdated, unneeded, inaccurate, , duplicate copies, of little historical significance, or no longer in demand. Frequency of circulation, community interest, and availability of newer or more valid materials are prime considerations.

Materials on local history and genealogy, and items created by local residents, are usually not withdrawn from the collection. This rule may apply also to materials related to area, county, and state information or creators.

Section 14: Duplication Of Materials

The purchase of duplicate copies of a particular item will be determined by popularity, importance of the material and its originator or subject, and budget considerations. The Library will withdraw duplicate copies when they are no longer needed for the collection.

Titles already represented in one department's collections may be purchased for another department if overlapping interest and reading level make such duplication desirable

Section 15: Replacement Of Materials

Currently useful materials withdrawn from the collection due to physical condition, damage, or loss may be considered for replacement.

Section 16: Gifts

The Brookfield Library gratefully accepts gifts of books, periodicals, other library materials, money, or stock or bonds presented by organizations and individuals. Gifts to the library will be accepted on behalf of the Library Board of Trustees by the Library Director.

Gifts must meet the same selection criteria as purchased materials. Gifts are welcome, subject to the following conditions:

1. The library assumes unconditional ownership. The Library must be free to use, sell, display, or eliminate its property according to prevailing goals, needs, policies, and priorities. Items not needed for the library collection may be given to the Friends of the Library to sell.
2. The library makes the final decision on acceptance, use, or disposal;
3. The library does not accept gift materials which are in poor physical condition, written in, underlined, highlighted, or otherwise marked;
4. If a gift item is already in the collection, a duplicate will be added only if it is in good condition, if it is needed or useful, or if the owned copy needs replacement;
5. Gift materials will not be accepted with restrictions or conditions which necessitate special housing, processing, or treatment, or which prevent

- integration of the gift into the general library collection. The only form of donor or memorial identification will be a gift plate;
6. Per Internal Revenue Service instructions, the library will not give a dollar valuation or appraisal of items received as gifts. It will, however, provide the donor with a statement verifying the number and type of materials donated and accepted, upon request;
 7. Gift materials will be subject to the same standards for acceptance, inclusion, classification, processing, housing, circulation, and withdrawal as are purchased materials
 8. Gifts of money or stock may be accepted with conditions attached, if those conditions are consistent with Library purposes and formally accepted by the Board.

When the library receives a cash gift for the purchase of materials, whether as a memorial or for any other purpose, the type or subject area of the materials to be purchased will be based, whenever possible, upon the wishes of the donor. Selection of specific titles, however, will be made by the library staff in accordance with the needs and selection policies of the library

Section 17: Requests for reconsideration of materials

The choice of library materials by users is an individual matter. While a person may reject materials for himself or herself and for his or her children, he or she cannot exercise censorship to restrict access to the materials by others.

A patron who wishes to object to the presence of one or more items in the library collection will first be offered a copy of this Materials Selection Policy to read.

If the patrons still wishes to object to the material, a formal objection-must be made in writing on The Brookfield Library's Request for Consideration of Library Material Form. All parts of the form must be completed fully. The Library Director will then review this complaint and make a written reply to the patron, with a copy to the Chairman of the Library Board.

If the patron is not satisfied with the reply, he or she may appeal the matter to the Library Board of Trustees. The trustees will review the complaint and the reply, discuss the relevant issues, and issue a timely, final written decision.

Adopted by the Library Board of Trustees, November 18, 1996; revised 9/24/03; revised 2/25/11

The Brookfield Library
Request for Reconsideration of Library Material

Author _____

Title _____

Format: Book Videotape or DVD Other _____

Request initiated by:

Name _____

Complete Address _____

Telephone _____

Requestor represents:

Self

Organization: _____

Other Group: _____

1. To what in the material do you object? Please be specific. _____

2. What do you feel might be the result of using this material? _____

3. For what age group would you recommend this item (if other than presently categorized)? _____

4. Is there anything good about this item? _____

5. Did you examine the entire item? Yes No

6. Are you aware of the judgment of this material by critics? Yes No

7. What do you believe is the theme of this material? _____

8. What would you like the Library Board to do about this item? _____

9. In its place, what material of equal quality would you recommend that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of our civilization? _____

Date submitted

Signature

Date reviewed by Library Director

Library Director's signature

Date reviewed by Library Board

Signature of Chairperson of Library Board

