

Collections Policy

Purpose

The Porter County Public Library System (PCPLS) and the Board of Trustees shall “provide free library services in order to meet the educational, informational, and recreational interests and needs of the public”, including “collecting and organizing books and other library materials” per IC 36-12-1-8. This policy guides the library’s responsibility to select, acquire, make accessible, & maintain the library’s collection.

Principles

PCPLS and the Board of Trustees acknowledge the following principles:

- We recognize the right of each individual to privately experience the full range of published thoughts and ideas without restriction.
- We value having a collection that serves patrons of all ages, backgrounds, and opinions by providing diverse viewpoints.
- We support resource sharing with other libraries and organizations to enhance access to resources and information for all people.

Objectives

The library collection functions to advance the library’s mission, in addition to the following:

- Enhance the enjoyment of life according to the full exercise of free choice
- Support the economic success & security of individuals and organizations
- Contribute to the awareness needed for successful self-government & civic participation
- Facilitate an informed community through education and research
- Create connections to our community’s heritage & local history
- Provide opportunities for personal, artistic, and intellectual growth
- Promote the joy of reading, content exploration, and content creation

Responsibility

The responsibility for the collection rests with the library director as appointed by the library board of trustees. Direct selection and deselection of library materials are performed by staff members qualified for this duty by education, training, and job classification.

This policy shall be reviewed alongside the preparation of each new strategic plan to be adopted by the library board of trustees, or minimally every 5 years.

Selection Criteria

Patron interest, both expressed and anticipated, and the library's strategic plan are the primary influences on material selection. The collection is composed of a variety of formats that maximize the accessibility, utility, and range of experiences offered by the collection. The library emphasizes breadth over depth, unabridged materials over abridged materials, equity over equality, and general (popular) materials over specialized, scholarly, and professional materials.

The selection of materials for the library's collection is guided by the following criteria:

- Popular demand or public interest
- Potential to meet collection objectives
- Present and potential relevance to community needs
- Relevance to the experience and contributions of diverse populations
- Relevance to current trends and events; contemporary significance
- Historical items with sustained or perpetual value
- Significance of the creator(s)
- Critical acclaim
- Effective expression and technical quality
- Suitability for the intended audience
- Prevalence of language as spoken in the community
- Physical design is suitable for library use
- Relation to present collection composition
- Value of content or resource in relation to its cost
- Condition

Additional criteria for electronic formats:

- Ease of use and availability of content platform
- Perpetuity & cost-effectiveness of the lending model
- The lending model is available to multiple, concurrent users
- Sustainable technical and support requirements
- Vendor data practices honor patron privacy

Not all criteria are necessarily applied to each selection decision.

Special Collections

The library may maintain special collections of materials focusing on particular topics in order to provide more in-depth coverage than may be found in the general collection. These collections will be limited to topics that meet a specific service need of the community or support a specific goal in the library's strategic plan. Within that context, materials and resources selected for these collections will meet the criteria listed above.

Acquisition

Library collections staff will determine the most appropriate & effective acquisition channels for obtaining materials. Considerations include but are not limited to the time and cost involved in prospecting titles, researching current holdings, availability, processing, and cataloging. Resource sharing with other libraries, as well as electronic and other methods of information access, are valid and necessary ways of meeting patron needs. Donated materials are subject to the same selection and acquisition criteria as all other materials.

Donations & Gifts

The library welcomes monetary contributions allocated for the purchase of library materials and also accepts donated or gifted materials. The library reserves the right to determine the disposition of all donations & gifts, and retains unconditional ownership of all donations & gifts.

The library will not assign a monetary value to donated or gifted materials that do meet the capital asset threshold, though the library may acknowledge them with a gift receipt.

Donated or gifted material not selected for inclusion in the collection will not be returned, and will be handled according to PCPLS policy regarding the disposition of assets.

Deselection Criteria

The collection is evaluated on an ongoing basis in order to maintain its usefulness, currency, and relevance. Items may be kept, redistributed, repurchased, re-catalogued, withdrawn, or their disposition otherwise changed to better suit collection objectives.

The deselection of materials from the library's collection is guided by the following criteria:

- Insufficient use or lack of patron demand
- Poor Condition
- Superseded, out of date, or obsolete
- Content available in other copies, collections, or formats
- Format, attributes, or physical design is no longer suitable for library use
- Ongoing maintenance cost is no longer justified or sustainable

Not all criteria are necessarily applied to each deselection decision. Withdrawn materials will be handled according to PCPLS policy regarding the disposition of assets.

Access & Intellectual Freedom

- The library endorses the principles of The Freedom to Read Statement, the Freedom to View Statement, and the Library Bill of Rights, including any interpretations thereof adopted by the American Library Association.
- The library is responsible for providing equitable access to its materials to all users.
- No material will be excluded because of the views expressed therein. No material will be excluded because of the age, background, opinion, or personal attributes of the author.
- The library's selection of materials for the collection does not constitute an endorsement of the content or its creator(s). The library neither encourages nor discourages any of the positions expressed in the materials in the library's collection.
- The library collection will be organized, marked, and maintained with the primary goal to help people find the materials they want. Any labeling, relocating, or alteration of materials in an attempt to predispose attitudes or impose a value judgment is prohibited.
- Library materials are not sequestered.
- The selection of materials will not be inhibited by the possibility that such materials may be accessible to children. Only parents and guardians have the right and responsibility to guide and direct the content choices of their own minor child(ren). The library will not take action to generalize those choices to the children of others.
- While anyone is free to select or reject materials for themselves, the freedom of others to read, inquire, or otherwise access content will not be restricted.

Reconsideration Requests

Patrons may request reconsideration of selected materials using the form provided. Requests are limited to 4 titles per year per patron, and to registered library district residents. The director may dismiss requests for reconsideration made within a 3-year period for the same title.

The director will appoint qualified staff to a committee for the purpose of re-evaluating valid reconsideration requests. After receiving the recommendation of the committee, the director will render the final decision and the patron will be notified.

This decision may be appealed to the board of trustees using established channels for public participation. The board will decide whether the library's actions are in accordance with library policies. If the library's actions are determined to be in conflict with library policies, the library board will direct another course of action.

We, the Library Board, consider all materials selected under this policy to be protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution and Article I of the Indiana State Constitution. If a court having jurisdiction over Porter County Public Library System decides that material in the collection is not constitutionally protected, such material may be removed.

References

"[The Freedom to Read Statement](#)", American Library Association, July 26, 2006.
<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement> (Accessed October 7, 2021)
Document ID: aaac95d4-2988-0024-6573-10a5ce6b21b2

"[Freedom to View Statement](#)", American Library Association, May 29, 2007.
<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomviewstatement> (Accessed October 7, 2021)
Document ID: 95444382-9c6c-e904-0962-be3aa96cdb5a

"[Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights](#)", American Library Association, July 30, 2007.
<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations> (Accessed October 7, 2021)
Document ID: 066677f2-3938-cbb4-7dba-2edff70d279b

"[Library Bill of Rights](#)", American Library Association, June 30, 2006.
<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill> (Accessed October 7, 2021)
Document ID: 669fd6a3-8939-3e54-7577-996a0a3f8952

History

Adopted: March 23, 2023

Supersedes: Collection Policy adopted May 18, 2022

Request for Reconsideration of Library Material

Return this form to any library location and it will be forwarded to the Director for review.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Library Card Number _____

Title of Material _____

Author / Creator _____

Format _____

1. Have you read this material? Yes, entirely___ Yes, partially___ No___

Describe your concerns about the material. Please be specific; cite pages, etc.

2. The Collections Policy guides the selection of Library materials. Have you had the opportunity to read this policy? Yes ___ No___

3. What action do you wish the Library to take?

4. Are you usually able to find what you want in the Library? Yes___ No___

If not, what materials would you like to be able to find in the Library collection?

Thank you for sharing your concerns. You will receive a written response from the library.

This form received by (Library staff) _____ Date _____