

Adopted: 04/18/2011
Effective: 04/25/2011

ALLEGAN DISTRICT LIBRARY MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

The mission of the Allegan District Library is to provide modern library resources and services necessary to meet the evolving educational, recreational, and informational needs of the community; to encourage reading by people of all ages; and to conserve our national and local cultural heritage.

To support this mission, library materials are selected, organized and made accessible in order to anticipate and meet the diverse needs of the community.

The scope of the collection is intended to offer a choice of format, viewpoint, and level of difficulty. Materials for varying levels of education and differing social and religious customs are provided and are included on the open shelves of the collection. The library supports the right of each individual to privately read, listen, and view the full range of published thought and ideas.

Individual items, which in and of themselves may be controversial or offensive to some patrons or staff, may appropriately be selected if their inclusion will contribute to the balance and effectiveness of the Library collection as a whole.

The Library Board endorses the American Library Association's Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, and Freedom to View statements. The Board believes that the Allegan District Library must supply books, materials, and services for the information, enlightenment, inspiration, and recreation of all the people in the community, and must provide information presenting all points of view on the significant problems and interests of our time.

OBJECTIVES OF THE COLLECTION:

1. The library assures open access to its holdings for all patrons. The Board of Trustees recognizes that while individuals are free to reject for themselves materials of which they do not approve, they cannot restrict the freedom of others to read, listen, and view within any guidelines set forth by the library, such as the Internet Use Policy.
2. Only parents and guardians have the right and responsibility to guide and direct the reading, listening and viewing choices of their own minor child(ren). The Library does not stand in the place of parents (in loco parentis).
3. The Board believes that material selection, the key to a good library, requires the best possible professional and critical attention. Materials must be

chosen not only for the intrinsic merit, but for their relationship to the collection as a whole and with an awareness of the availability of the materials through interlibrary loan.

4. The library is responsible for providing materials to residents and taxpayers of all ages, backgrounds, and opinions. The library collection taken as a whole will be an unbiased and balanced source of information, representing as many viewpoints as possible. Subjects will be covered in sufficient depth and breadth to meet anticipated and expressed individual and community needs.

5. A solid collection of materials should have:

- Up-to-date information on both current and historical topics
- Information on the history of Allegan, City and County, as well as materials useful for genealogical research
- Entertainment and recreation, including popular and contemporary works as well as those of enduring worth
- Materials to aid patrons in both formal and self-guided education
- Materials to promote informed participation in the affairs of contemporary society
- Materials which encourage and enhance personal and intellectual growth
- A variety of viewpoints on controversial questions, with a balance of opinion represented whenever available.

6. Exclusions: If an item is not chosen for the library's collection, it has been excluded because it does not measure up to the library's standards; because the library already has adequate coverage in the subject, or because of budget limitations. Materials will be excluded which may be libelous or promote racial or religious intolerance or hatred.

7. Gifts: The library accepts gifts of books and materials without commitment as to final disposition. Gift additions must meet the same selection criteria as purchased materials. Final disposition of gifts lies with the library. Generally, items not added to the collection will be sold by the Library's Friends Committee at the library, offered to other libraries or agencies, or recycled as necessary.

8. Discards: A constant ongoing evaluation of the collection is necessary to identify outdated and damaged items which will be discarded. This is essential to maintain the most economical utilization of space and to maintain the library's reputation for the reliability and accuracy of its materials. Worn, dated, unused or damaged items will be withdrawn from the collection. The library strives to use environmentally sound practices when disposing of withdrawn items.

COMPLAINTS:

The library director will be available to talk with a complaining patron to determine the reason for their objection to the item. If the problem cannot be resolved in this manner, the patron should fill out the form "Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources". The completed complaint form will be forwarded by the Library Director to the Library Board's Material Selection Review Committee within seven days. The Library Director will acknowledge in writing the receipt of the complaint form and outline the procedure for the patron.

The Materials Selection Committee will review the questioned material to be sure that all selection criteria were met. The Committee will present its opinion and recommendation to the Board of Trustees at the next official meeting.

The Board of Trustees will take action on the Committee recommendation and will send a letter to the complainant stating their decision. The decision of the Board is final.

Persons still wishing to express concerns to the Board will be heard during a regular meeting under the agenda item "Public Comment".

CONCLUSION

The library acquires and provides access to new resources and formats as they are judged feasible, suitable, and relevant to the community. Expanding areas of knowledge, technological advances, changing social values, and cultural differences require flexibility, open-mindedness, and responsiveness in the evaluation and re-evaluation of all library resources.

This revised MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY, as adopted by the District Library Board, will be reviewed by the Library Director, professional staff, and the Board of Trustees at least every five years.

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.

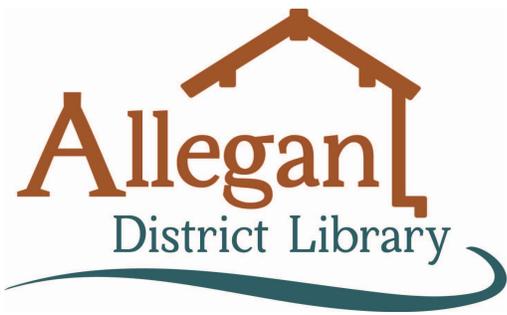
III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

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 that 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.

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



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Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources

Approved: 12-01

Request initiated by _____ Phone _____

Address _____ Zip _____

Resource on which you are commenting:

_____ Book _____ Film _____ Other _____
_____ Magazine _____ Audio Recording _____ Newspaper
_____ Library Program

_____ Electronic Information/Database (please specify) _____

What brought this resource to your attention? _____

Title _____

Author/Producer _____

Did you read (listen to, watch) the entire resource? _____ If not, what parts? _____

What do you believe is the subject of this resource? _____

What concerns you about this resource? _____

Are there resource(s) you would like to suggest to provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic? _____

What are your recommendations concerning this resource? _____

Signature _____ Date _____