

Burnham Memorial Library
Colchester, VT

MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY

Purpose of Policy

The responsibility for the collection rests with the Library Board. The responsibility for selection of materials rests with the Library Director, who may delegate this task to qualified professional staff. These librarians may in turn consult with other staff who have a variety of expertise in their respective fields. The purpose of this policy is to inform the public about the principles upon which the selection decisions of library materials and resources are made.

Goals

The selection of library materials should be based on a comprehensive knowledge of the nature and special characteristics of the local community. The collection should include subjects of permanent value and current general interest on international, national, and local levels. A *complete* collection of library materials should not be the goal, but the best and most useful materials should be selected. Some materials may be acquired primarily on the basis of artistic merit, scholarship or value to humanity, while others are selected to satisfy the informational, recreational or educational interests of the community. Materials for individuals of varying ages, educational levels, and interests should be acquired. The library acquires a wide range of materials in a variety of formats according to their suitability for public library use and their cost effectiveness. Each type of material is considered in terms of its own merit and its intended audience. Materials selection is necessarily limited by the library budget; no attempt will be made to make this a comprehensive or exhaustive collection.

Selection Criteria

Library staff members with selection responsibilities use a variety of professional and popular review sources. Professional review sources include *Kirkus Review*, *Library Journal*, *School Library Journal* and *The Horn Book*. Selectors may also use reviews in local and national magazines, newspapers, and Internet resources to select materials for the library collection. The library welcomes purchase suggestions from library patrons but makes no guarantee that these suggestions will become automatic purchases.

Selection criteria include:

- Currency and accuracy of material
- Reputation of author, producer, publisher
- Accessibility of information to general audience
- Format, including quality of illustrations, binding, etc
- Subject area
- Demand or need
- Cost

Local Materials

The library collection includes materials on Vermont, Chittenden County, and Colchester, emphasizing state and local history. The library is under no obligation to add to the collection materials written and/or produced by local or state residents or by those who have connections with Vermont. Each item is selected on its own merits and must meet general selection criteria to be added to the library collection.

Donations

The library accepts gifts and donations of both new and used materials. Upon receipt these items become property of Burnham Memorial Library and the Library Director has the authority to decide how these materials will be used. No conditions may be imposed relating to materials after acceptance by the library. The library reserves the right to refuse any or all donated materials. Donations may be: (1) added to the library collection; (2) put aside for the Friends of the Burnham Library sale; (3) added to one of the library's Little Free Libraries; (4) offered to other libraries or agencies; (5) discarded. Donors may request a receipt for these gift items, but the library does not appraise donated items for value.

Interlibrary Loan

Burnham Library offers free Interlibrary Loan service to all Colchester residents. The library will make every effort to obtain materials that the library does not own from other libraries for patron use. The library makes no guarantee that requested materials will be located; nor does the library make guarantees about when Interlibrary Loans materials will arrive. The use of Interlibrary Loan materials is governed by the rules and procedures of the lending library.

Collection Maintenance

The collection is maintained by retaining or replacing essential materials and removing, on a systematic and continuous basis, those works that are worn, outdated, or no longer in demand.

Policy on Controversial Materials

No library materials shall be excluded based on expressions of race, religion, nationality, or political or social views. Censorship is a purely individual matter. Responsibility for the reading/viewing/listening material of children and adolescents rests with their parent or legal guardian. The library does not stand *in loco parentis*. This policy defends the principles of freedom to read, view or hear, and no material shall be removed from the collection save under the procedures for Reconsideration of Library Materials adopted by this Board of Trustees.

This Board has adopted and declared that it will adhere to and support:

- The Library Bill of Rights
- The Freedom to Read Statement adopted by the American Library Association
- The Restricted Access to Library Materials Statement, and

- The Free Access to Libraries for Minors Statement, all of which are made a part hereof.

Policy approved by the Library Board of Trustees: April 15, 2004

Amended: July 20, 2023

Reviewed: September 17, 2020