

# Prospect Heights Public Library District Materials Selection Policy

## PURPOSE

Library materials are chosen based on their potential to serve the recreational and educational needs of the community, as far as community surveys, library patron requests, circulation records and the Library's long-term plan can determine these needs. The Library is a public institution with limited resources. Carefully and judiciously selecting materials, while keeping diversity in mind, is important and reflects the goals of the Library Board of Trustees.

## PRINCIPLES OF SELECTION

General criteria for selecting materials include:

- Anticipated or existing patron demand
- Broad community appeal and popularity
- Diversity of viewpoint
- Authority, reputation, and/or skill of the author or publisher
- Accuracy
- Timeliness
- Awards and/or critical or public acclaim
- Reviews in established, reputable review media
- Existing holdings in the subject area and availability of varying viewpoints
- Availability of the materials from other sources
- Price as a reasonable value for anticipated use

While it is appropriate for a Library to excel in one or more subjects, the collection as a whole must be planned so that all subject areas are adequately developed through sound selection practices. Due to staff and funding limitations, materials of a highly specialized, technical or professional nature cannot be systematically acquired. Materials outside the scope of the Library's collection may be obtained through interlibrary loan.

The Library serves a diverse community, and selection of materials cannot benefit from one group to the exclusion of others. The Library does not advocate for the ideas found in its collection; rather, the Library provides a safe haven for those ideas. The selection of any item or resource does not constitute an endorsement of its contents by the Library, and no materials are marked or identified to imply or show approval or disapproval of their contents. While recognizing an obligation to encourage reading and library use among students, the Prospect Heights Public Library does not routinely purchase or hold curriculum-oriented materials that are more appropriately found in school libraries.

It is in the public interest for the Prospect Heights Public Library District to make available diverse views and expressions, including those that may seem unorthodox or unpopular with the majority. We embrace the guidance from the American Library Association (ALA) and its subdivision Association for the Library Service to Children (ALSC) on the importance of diversity, especially in children's literature. While everyone is free to reject titles that they do not approve for themselves and their children, they cannot restrict the freedom of others to choose what to read, hear, or view. A diverse, equitable

collection is important. Material will not be excluded because of the race, nationality, religion, gender, sexual orientation, political or social view or either the author or the material.

### **FREE ACCESS TO LIBRARY MATERIALS**

Selection guidelines do not guarantee that each item purchased for the Library's collection is suitable for each person who may choose to select it. Young people under the age of 18 have free access to materials from the adult collection, and parents may choose to advise their children in making an appropriate selection. Selection of resources for the Library's collections will not be inhibited by the possibility that some resources may inadvertently come into the possession of children. Responsibility for the reading, listening, and viewing of Library resources for children rests solely with their parents or guardians.

### **PERSONS SELECTING LIBRARY MATERIALS**

Responsibility for this Policy rests with the Library Board of Trustees. Implementation of the Policy is delegated by the Board to the Executive Director and professional staff who are qualified by education, training, and experience and will abide by the Library's collection development procedures governing the selection, acquisition and weeding of library materials of all formats.

### **DESELECTION**

To maintain relevant collections and content, in all formats, the library must routinely evaluate and deselect materials. Criteria for withdrawing items include, but are not limited to:

- declining interest or diminished circulation
- poor condition
- unnecessary duplication
- inaccurate or outdated information.

Deselected materials may be donated to other non-profit organizations.

### **OBJECTIONS TO SELECTED MATERIALS**

Any resident or taxpayer of the Prospect Heights Public Library District has the right to question the inclusion or exclusion of any title in the Library's collection.

The following steps will be used when an individual feels that further action is necessary to address concerns about a Library resource. For the duration of this process, the material in question will remain in circulation in the Library collection.

1. A concerned patron who is dissatisfied with earlier informal discussions will be offered a packet of materials that includes the Library's mission statement, selection policy, reconsideration form, and the Library Bill of Rights.
2. Patrons are required to complete and submit a reconsideration form to the library director.
3. The director, with appropriate professional staff, will review the reconsideration form and the material in question, to consider whether its selection follows the criteria stated in the Materials Selection Policy.

4. Within 15 business days, the director will make a decision and send a letter to the concerned person who requested the reconsideration, stating the reasons for the decision.
5. If the individual is not satisfied with the decision, a written appeal may be submitted within 10 business days to the Board of Trustees.
6. If the Board plans to address the appeal at their board meeting, the individual will be notified of when and where the meeting will be held.
7. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to limit the length of public comments.
8. The decision of the Board is final.

Since all political, religious, and social opinions should be represented in a public library, no group or individual will be permitted to impose a partisan emphasis upon the Library's collection. Frankness of language, a widespread and contemporary phenomenon, will never, in and of itself be considered sufficient justification to remove or restrict library materials.

#### **DONATIONS**

The Library does not seek donations. Any donated items become the unrestricted property of the Prospect Heights Public Library District and may be disposed of in various ways at the discretion of the Executive Director in accordance with Illinois law. The Library does not provide appraisals for donated items. Individuals seeking an appraisal for donations should consult with a legal or tax professional.

#### **SELF-PUBLISHED MATERIALS**

The Prospect Heights Public Library District does not purchase unsolicited materials or act in lieu of professional review sources. In general, the Library does not collect self-published books. The Library accepts donated copies of self-published materials but does not guarantee inclusion in the collection. Items donated to the Library become the property of the Library and cannot be returned to the donating party. Donated titles are subject to library policies regarding deselection.

#### **INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM STATEMENTS**

The Board of Trustees of Prospect Heights Public Library District endorses and promotes the American Library Association in the following statements:

- A. [Library Bill of Rights](#)
- B. [Freedom to Read](#)
- C. [Freedom to View](#)