

Riverside Public Library  
**MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY**  
(Selection Standards, Gifts, Re-Evaluation of Materials, Weeding)

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

It is the function of the Riverside Public Library to serve its patrons by making available to them a variety of print and non-print library materials to meet and to anticipate their present and future educational, informational, cultural, and recreational interests and needs. Because the Riverside Public Library has limited resources and space, the adoption of and adherence to a Materials Selection Policy is necessary to ensure a carefully balanced collection of quality materials.

## **II. DEFINITION OF TERMS**

- A. "Library" means the Riverside Public Library.
- B. "Materials" means all forms of recorded communication.
- C. "Non-print materials" means all materials in forms other than printed, including videocassettes, audio cassettes, CD-ROMS, DVDs, electronic resources, and compact discs.
- D. "Print materials" means all materials in printed form.
- E. "MLS" refers to the Metropolitan Library System.
- F. "Selection" means a decision to add a specific item or items of material to the library's collection.
- G. "Weeding" means a decision to delete a specific item or items of material from the library's collection.

## **III. POLICY ON LIBRARY MATERIALS SELECTION AND CENSORSHIP**

### **A. General Principles**

1. All acquisitions, whether purchased or donated, shall be governed by this selection policy.
2. The selection process shall be based, as much as possible upon the objective criteria set forth in this selection policy.
3. The common purpose of all public libraries is to provide access to the universe of information, and especially that information of immediate relevance and interest to the community it serves.

4. Application of the selection criteria set forth in this policy shall be guided by the mission statement, goals, objectives, and other policies established by the Library Board of Trustees.
5. The library's collection should, whenever possible, contain a diverse range of views on important, complicated and/or controversial issues. The library does not promote particular beliefs or views.
6. This library does not practice censorship. Selection of material shall be made solely upon the merits of the work as it fulfills the selection standards herein.
7. Any patron may express concern regarding an item in the collection. The library has procedures for the reconsideration of the selection of any item in its collection. (See Section VII and Appendix B)
8. Supervision of a minor's access to materials rests solely with his or her parents or guardians. Selection of adult material will not be limited by the possibility that materials may come into the possession of a minor. Parent and guardians - and only parents and guardians - have the right and the responsibility to restrict the access of their children - and only their children - to library resources.
9. The responsibility for the policy governing the inclusion of materials in the library collection rests with the Board of Trustees. The Board delegates the authority and responsibility for the selection of library materials to the Library Director, and, under her/his direction, to the professional staff who are qualified for this activity by reason of education, training and experience.
10. Patrons and library staff may recommend materials for selection. Recommendations for selection of library materials may be made by the general public or the library staff. Purchasing decisions will be determined according to selections standards herein.
11. Additional copies of a title may be purchased as demand warrants.
12. This Board adheres to the Library Bill of Rights of the American Library Association (ALA)[Appendix C], the Freedom to Read Statement adopted by the ALA [Appendix D], and the Freedom to View Statement adopted by the American Film and Video Association and endorsed by the ALA [Appendix E], Free Access to Libraries for Minors [Appendix F], and Access for Children and Young Adults to Non-Print Materials [Appendix G], which are in the attached Appendixes.

#### **IV. CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF MATERIALS FOR ADULTS, YOUNG ADULTS AND CHILDREN.**

Librarians use their subject knowledge and expertise in combination with the standards listed below to select and evaluate collection items. An item need not meet all criteria to be selected.

#### **A. General Criteria**

- Availability and suitability of format.
- Suitability of subject, style and reading level for the intended audience.
- Critics' reviews from professional journals and newspapers.
- Recommendations from the staff and public.
- Cost relative to the value the item contributes to the collection.
- Space required relative to the value the item contributes to the collection.
- The extent to which the item supplements, expands on, or supports the existing collection, rather than duplicates it.
- Relevance to observed and anticipated community needs and desires.
- Reputation and qualifications of the author, artist, and publisher of the work.
- Demand for the material.
- Winners and/or nominees of awards, such as the Pulitzer Prize, Man Booker Prize, Nobel Prize, National Book Award, Heartland Prize, Newbery Medal, Caldecott Medal, Printz Award, Sibert Medal, Rebecca Caudill Award, Monarch Award, Coretta Scott King Award, and the Pura Belpre Medal.

#### **B. Content Criteria**

- Comprehensiveness of treatment, including breadth and depth.
- Skill and purpose of author or artist.
- Long-term or historical significance or interest.
- Consideration will be given to features which aid in use, such as indexes, cross references, bibliographies, and the like.
- Items included in standard bibliographies will be considered.

#### **C. Electronic Format Criteria**

- Ease of use of the product.

- Accessibility to multiple users.
- Continued access to retrospective information when desirable.
- Reduction of space requirements over print products.

## **V. STANDARDS FOR MATERIALS SELECTION FOR ADULTS, YOUNG ADULTS AND CHILDREN**

Unless otherwise indicated, these standards apply to materials selected for all reading levels.

### **PRINT MATERIALS**

#### **A. Reference Sources**

1. Reference materials provide timely and accurate information on a wide variety of topics. Because of method of use, rarity or cost, they are maintained for in-library use only.
2. These materials will meet the MLS Minimum Reference Standards for Public Libraries, the MLS Core Reference List for Public Libraries and/or the MLS Youth Services Recommended Reference Sources.
3. The library does not maintain a separate reference collection for young adults. Reference materials of interest to young adults (defined as junior high and high school students) may be purchased for either the juvenile or adult reference collections.

#### **B. Non-fiction Circulating Collection**

1. The library maintains a collection of general interest nonfiction titles to provide for the information needs and browsing interests of library patrons.
2. Efforts will be made to provide representational points of view on subjects.
3. These materials should be timely, current, and accurate.
4. According to demand, some non-fiction materials may be acquired in Large Print format.

#### **C. Fiction**

1. The library provides a collection of standard and contemporary fiction titles as well as genre fiction for the intellectual enrichment, information and entertainment needs and interests of Riverside residents.
2. Depending on demand, some fiction may be acquired in Large Print format.

3. Fiction for children and young adults should be acquired in the following categories, divided according to format and reading level: Board, Easy, Easy Reader, Juvenile (up to 6<sup>th</sup> grade), and Young Adult (7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade). The Young Adult fiction collection is further divided into three sections: general fiction, the Flam collection of popular paperbacks, and graphic novels.

**D. Periodicals (magazines and newspapers)**

1. The library maintains a collection of periodicals for informational and recreational reading.
2. Periodicals are also purchased to serve the staff as materials selections aids and as professional reading.
3. Due to space limitations most magazines are retained for three years.
4. The length of retention for newspapers varies by title, ranging from three months to two years.

**E. Pamphlets**

1. Free and/or inexpensive items are collected to augment the adult and young adult book and periodicals collection.
2. The items may include clippings, pictures, maps and government documents.

**NON-PRINT MATERIALS**

**F. Online Resources**

1. Some reference sources, periodical and newspaper databases are purchased in electronic formats.

**G. Videocassettes and DVDs**

1. The library's videocassette/DVD collection is intended to serve the informational, educational and recreational needs of the community.
2. The collection strives to complement, rather than to compete with, local video/DVD rental stores by offering a different collection focus.
3. Because of the great diversity of materials available, no single set of criteria can be applied to all items. Titles may be evaluated using one or more of the following specific criteria:
  - a. Relationship of the item to the existing collection and to other materials available on the subject.
  - b. Recognition by prizes, awards, etc., given by critical organizations or institutes.

- c. Provides a presentation most effectively or appropriately delivered by the video/DVD format.
- d. Provides information that is unique to or only available in this format.

**H. Audio Compact Discs (excluding Books on Tape or CDs)**

- 1. The library recognizes sound recording as a major form of publication.
- 2. The library selects a wide range of musical styles and genres, according to patron demand.

**I. Books in Non-Print Formats**

- 1. Using the above standards in selecting fiction and non-fiction, an effort will be made to acquire titles in audio format for patrons.
- 2. Book and cassette or book and compact disc (BAC) sets will be acquired for young patrons.

**J. CD-ROMs**

- 1. CD-ROMs are purchased for educational and recreational use in home computers.
- 2. Whenever possible, CD-ROMs compatible with multiple systems (e.g., Windows and Macintosh) will be selected.

**K. Video Games**

- 1. The library does not purchase materials for stand-alone game systems.

**L. Realia**

- 1. An effort will be made to select puppets, puzzles and other realia for a circulating collection for children.

**SPECIAL COLLECTIONS**

**M. Local History Collection**

- 1. Scholarly and popular materials of current and/or historical value related to Riverside, its environs, people, history, and geography will be collected.
- 2. All formats will be considered.

**N. Local Authors Collection**

- 1. An effort will be made to acquire (through donation or, when necessary, purchase) any published materials written by previous or current residents of Riverside. These items will be kept in a separate location.

**O. Frederick Law Olmsted Collection**

- 1. The Village of Riverside has a special interest in Frederick Law Olmsted. Therefore, a special collection on this individual and related subjects has been

established with a separate policy agreement which is set forth in Appendix A. This agreement established objectives and criteria for the selection of this collection.

## **VI. SPECIAL AREAS**

### **A. Donations and Gifts**

Consistent with this policy, the library may accept gifts of materials or funds for the purchase of materials. The library reserves the right to evaluate and to dispose of gifts in accordance with the library's objectives and this policy. The library reserves the right to determine how donated funds will be spent. If a gift of funds is conditioned so that it cannot be spent in a manner consistent with the library's objectives and this policy, the library may return or abandon the gift. The library discourages the attachment of conditions to gifts, and no conditions may be imposed relating to any gift after its acceptance by the library.

### **B. Endowments**

Throughout the years a series of endowment funds have been established as a result of substantial gifts to the library. The following endowment funds exist.

1. Susan E. Batko Endowment Fund: the interest from this fund is to be used for the purchase of E (easy) childrens books based on this selection policy.
2. General Endowment Fund: the interest from this fund is to be used for both material and non-material items for both adults and young people. Purchases of materials shall be consistent with this selection policy.
3. Children's Endowment Fund: the interest from this fund is to be used to purchase children's print or non-print materials using the criteria set forth in this policy.
4. Kovalsky Endowment Fund: the interest from this fund is to be used to purchase non-fiction childrens books using the criteria set forth in this policy.
5. Ernest E. Dardwin Endowment Fund: the interest from this fund is to be used solely for the purchase of books, publications, reference materials and video/media supplies using the criteria set forth in this policy.

### **C. Materials in Honor of Persons or Events**

The library welcomes monetary gifts, books, or other contributions as memorials.

1. A donor wishing to give materials should contact the Adult Services Manager, Library Director, or Reference Librarian for information.
2. The donor may make a specific request for use of cash contributions, or leave the selection to the library staff. Donors are encouraged to let the library make the specific selection but they may make a recommendation of subject matter.

3. Memorial or honorary materials bear a gift plate showing the name of the donor and the person/event honored.
4. Memorial or honorary materials become part of the library collection and are subject to the library's standard policies regarding cataloging and weeding.
5. Books for Newborns -- Through the generosity of the Riverside Friends of the Library, a Board book is donated to the Youth Services Department for each new baby in a Riverside household. Books are chosen based on this selection policy.

## **VII. POLICY ON RE-EVALUATION OF MATERIALS**

- A. The library does not practice censorship and adheres to the "*Freedom to Read*" statement of the American Library Association. [Appendix D.]
- B. Complaints from patrons regarding library materials shall be handled as follows:
  1. Patrons desiring reconsideration of any material should complete the "*Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials*" form available at the circulation desk. This form is attached as Appendix B.
  2. The initial request for re-evaluation will be referred to the appropriate department head.
  3. The requesting patron may be interviewed by the department head. The requesting patron will be informed by the department head that the purpose of the re-evaluation is to determine whether the material, in light of the patron's complaint and any other information deemed appropriate, still meets the objective criteria set forth in this selection policy.
  4. If the department head, after informing the patron of the procedures involved in the selection of materials and the library's inability to practice censorship, cannot informally resolve the complaint, the patron will be offered an interview with the Library Director.
  5. At the direction of the Library Director, a review panel may be established, consisting of selected Library employees and may include a library employee from another library. The panel will evaluate the challenged material to determine whether the material, in light of the patron's complaint and any other information deemed appropriate, still meets the objective criteria set forth in this selection policy. The review by the review panel shall be a *de novo* review, and the fact that the material is presently in the library's collection shall be without significance.
  6. The Library Director shall inform the Library Board of Trustees of the *Request for Reconsideration* and all proceedings thereon.



7. The role of the Library Board of Trustees is to ensure that the procedures set forth in this policy are followed. Beyond this, the Library Trustees agree that it is inappropriate for them to participate in the actual process of selecting or weeding individual items of material or in the re-evaluation of individual items of material at the request of a patron.
8. If the review panel concludes that the challenged materials meets the objective criteria set forth in this policy, the complaining patron will be so informed. If the patron wishes he or she may request an opportunity to address the Library Board of Trustees in person at a regularly scheduled meeting. All meetings of the Library Board of Trustees are open to the public. However, addressing the Board is a privilege granted specifically by the Board. Because other business must be considered at each meeting, stated limits on the number of speakers and the time allotted to each speaker may be set by the Board if necessary.
9. The Library Board of Trustees shall not reverse the decision of the staff or the review panel unless the Board concludes, after consideration of the challenged material, the patron's complaint and any other information deemed appropriate, that the review panel or the staff acted arbitrarily and capriciously and, in so doing, abused its discretion. Such a reversal requires a written decision by the Library Board of Trustees detailing the way in which the review panel or the staff abused its discretion.
10. The completion and signing of the "*Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials*" form will identify the patron with specific library materials. As a result of lodging a written complaint the patron loses his/her right to privacy protection. Confidentiality of library records is waived as to the materials described in the complaint.

## **VIII. REVIEWING THE COLLECTION**

In order to maintain active, up-to-date, useful collections, all materials will be periodically examined in terms of relevance to the collection, patron needs, and the objectives and policies of the library in order to determine which materials need to be discarded (weeded). Other specific factors to be considered in the decision to weed materials are:

### **A. WHAT TO WEED:**

1. Last Date of Circulation

If the material has not circulated in the past two years, it is considered as a candidate for weeding.

2. Physical Condition

If the material is in bad condition, it is considered a candidate for weeding, rebinding or possible replacement.

3. Accuracy/Reliability

In areas where advances in research can occur quickly, such as science and technology, the material over five years old is considered a candidate for weeding.

4. Timeliness

Material in an area which is no longer timely, i.e., information considered "fad" literature or which no longer reflects local community interest, is considered a candidate for weeding.

5. Duplicate Copies

A duplicate copy of material purchased at the height of demand, but no longer in great demand, is considered a candidate for weeding.

**B. WHAT NOT TO WEED:**

1. Core Collection Material

Material that is listed in a standard current core bibliography (e.g., SLS Core Reference List and Supplements, Books for Small and Medium Sized Libraries, Fiction Catalog, etc.) is considered for retention.

2. Balancing Viewpoints Material

Material that represents a balance for the collection, and which is the only source available, is considered for retention.

3. Out of Print Material

Out of print material is considered for retention if it has valued use and if replacement material is unavailable.

4. Riverside Authors Collection

Material by a Riverside author is retained regardless of age, condition or circulation.

5. Local History Collection

Local history material is retained regardless of age, condition or circulation.

6. Olmsted Collection

Material included in the Frederick Law Olmsted collection is retained regardless of age, condition or circulation as designated in Appendix A.

7. Classic Collection

Classic materials will not be discarded on the basis of their circulation. If, because of physical condition, they are weeded, careful consideration will be given to their replacement. Classics are defined as having recognized or permanent value, forming part of the permanent cultural achievement of mankind, felt to be among the great works of all time, or the works of any author, ancient or modern, whose work is generally accepted as being a standard or model.

8. Last Copies of Fiction

Works of fiction to be discarded which are discovered to be the last available copies in SLS, will be sent to the Chicago Public Library Last Copy Center, as designated in an agreement between the two agencies.

## **IX. REVISING THE POLICY**

This Statement of Policy for the Selection of Library Materials for the Riverside Public Library will be regularly evaluated (at least every five years) and as the collection grows and situations demand, it will be altered in accordance with the findings of the Board or staff and as subsequently approved by the Board of Trustees.

Approved by Board of Trustees on April 14, 1992.

Amended by Board of Trustees on July 13, 1993.

Amended by Board of Trustees on February 14, 1995.

Amended by Board of Trustees on October 10, 1995

Amended by Board of Trustees on November 14, 1995

Amended by Board of Trustees on June 11, 1996

Amended by Board of Trustees on July 9, 1996

Amended by Board of Trustees on May 9, 2000

Amended by Board of Trustees on September 17, 2001

Amended by Board of Trustees on February 8, 2005

RIVERSIDE PUBLIC LIBRARY  
REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Book \_\_\_ Recording \_\_\_ Video \_\_\_ CD \_\_\_  
DVD/

Author/Artist \_\_\_\_\_ Periodical \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_

Publisher \_\_\_\_\_ Copyright Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. Are you familiar with the Riverside Public Library selection policies? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What brought this title to your attention? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Did you read/hear/view the entire work? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Please comment on the resource as a whole as well as being specific on those matters  
which concern you (cite pages, paragraphs, that would be helpful).  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Why do you wish it to be reconsidered? Please be specific.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Do you officially represent a group or yourself? \_\_\_\_\_

If a group, please name. \_\_\_\_\_

Additional comments \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Notwithstanding the fact that you are entitled to confidentiality with respect to all library materials which you use, by signing this complaint you are identifying yourself with the materials cited in the complaint and are thereby waiving your right to confidentiality as to those materials cited in the complaint.

Your signature \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of staff member accepting this request \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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**February 2005**



