

## XV. COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

### A. Purpose:

1. The purpose of this policy is to guide library staff and to inform the residents of Whitman County about the principles upon which materials selections are made. The policy was written to define the standards and to outline the responsibilities for materials selection. Within the following guidelines, staff members must use their professional judgment to determine which materials best meet the objectives of the library system and the needs of its patrons.
2. Purchase of materials shall be in harmony with the General Library Goals as established by the Whitman County Library Board of Trustees and will reflect objectives established in the Board's five-year plan.
3. The word "materials" has the widest possible meaning; it may include books (hardbound and paperbound), objects, pamphlets, maps, periodicals, newspapers, audio, video formats, downloadable collections, and other non-print materials.
4. "Selection" refers to the decision that must be made to add a given item to the collection or to retain one already in the collection. It does not refer to guidance in assisting a library patron.

### B. Audience and User Groups:

1. Adult Patrons:
  - i. The materials in the adult collection are selected primarily to serve the needs of adult patrons.
2. Children and Young Adults:
  - i. The materials in the children's collections are selected to serve the needs of toddlers, pre-school age children, school age children, middle school and high school students, and young adults.
  - ii. Books and materials in the children's collection include non-book materials, picture books, audio books, beginning readers, juvenile non-fiction, and juvenile fiction.
  - iii. At the library, children and young people have access to all books in the system. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to oversee their selection of materials, as staff does not monitor selection of material.
3. Branch Patrons:
  - i. Materials in branch libraries are based upon rotating collections from the general collection. Materials are selected for branch libraries by headquarters staff and branch personnel.
  - ii. Branch patrons are able to request any circulating item from WCL.
  - iii. Periodical selection is influenced by the size and character of the community served and by the availability of space and funds.
4. Library and School Relationship:

- i. In general, the school library should be considered as the primary resource for the student's assignments. The public library should provide materials for additional study, research, and the creative use of leisure time.
- ii. While students from public schools, private schools, institutions of higher learning, and home schooling programs are actively encouraged to use Whitman County Library System, it should be noted that it is not possible for the library to purchase materials specific to curricula. It is library policy to purchase materials which will supplement and complement offerings of school libraries within the library district.

C. Use of the library's collection:

1. The Library Board recognizes that many materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons. Selection will not be made on the basis of any assumed approval or disapproval, but solely on the merit of the work as it relates to the library's objectives and serves the expressed or anticipated needs and interests the community.
2. Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents, and nothing will be sequestered except for the express purpose of protecting it from injury or theft.
3. The use of rare or scholarly items of great value will be controlled to the extent required to preserve them from harm.
4. Responsibility for the reading of minors rests with their parents and legal guardians. Selection of adult materials will not be limited by the possibility that materials may come into the possession of minors.
5. Patrons not finding desired materials in the library's collection may request that the item be borrowed through interlibrary loan or that it be purchased. Patrons wishing to request such materials should fill out a standard request for materials form. (See also Interlibrary Loan Policy).

D. Responsibility for Selection:

1. The final responsibility for all selection of materials rests with the Director as authorized by the Library Board.
2. Selection of materials is vested in the Director, and under his or her direction, in members of the staff who are qualified by reason of education and training. Materials are selected in accordance with library policy.
3. Suggestions for materials to be purchased are always welcome from patrons, Board, and staff members.

E. Criteria for Selection:

1. The general criteria considered in selecting and purchasing materials include:
  - i. Significance and permanent value to the existing collection.
  - ii. Qualifications of author or producer.
  - iii. Suitability of subject and style for intended audience.

- iv. Quality of format.
- v. Availability of materials in the subject and balance of materials currently available in the collection.
- vi. Demand by patrons.
- vii. Attention given to the item by reviewers and general news media.
- viii. Availability of materials at other libraries.
- ix. Price – Extremely expensive materials, regardless of quality or favorable reviews, are often beyond the limits of the library budget.
- x. Quality of translation.

F. Selection Tools:

1. Since it is impossible for librarians to examine all items being considered for purchase, it is necessary to depend on reliable selection aids. These sources may include:
  - i. Library Journal
  - ii. Booklist
  - iii. Wilson Library Bulletin
  - iv. School Library Journal
  - v. Publisher's Weekly
  - vi. New York Times Book Review
  - vii. Kirkus
  - viii. Horn Book
  - ix. Kliatt
  - x. Patron requests or recommendation
  - xi. Bibliographies and other selective lists published by library, educational, and scientific organizations.

G. Procedures for Selection:

1. Reviews are read.
2. Patron requests are evaluated for purchase
3. The number of copies to be purchased is determined by demand and budgetary factors.
4. The amount of money available for expenditure also determines the number of items and copies to be ordered.
5. Materials may be rejected for purchase for the following reasons:
  - i. Lack of demand

- ii. Inappropriate for collection
  - iii. Sufficient titles on the subject already available in collection
  - iv. Negative reviews
  - v. No reviews available
  - vi. Too expensive or other budget constraints
  - vii. Format is inappropriate for collection
  - viii. Too specialized or technical to appeal to a broad audience.
6. Materials are ordered from a wide variety of vendors. Generally, an item will be ordered first through vendors who provide the best discount. If the item is unavailable through the vendor, it will then be ordered direct from the publisher or producer. Materials may be purchased through local bookstores if the item is needed immediately or if the item is not available through the regular vendor.
  7. The library does not participate in preview programs. Exceptions may be made only with the permission of the Director.
  8. The library participates in selected book clubs or purchase plans authorized by the Director. Participation in a book club should be based on savings to the library or on acquisition of materials not readily available in another manner.
  9. The library may subscribe to standing order plans as authorized by the Director.

#### H. Scope of Collection:

1. Through careful selection the library attempts to maintain a balanced collection of quality materials, including items of contemporary significance and permanent value, as well as a sampling of current social issues and ephemeral items.
2. Although the needs of the library district patrons are the major factor in the choice of materials, all subject areas, including religion, politics, sex education, as well as social, moral, economic, and scientific issues are considered for selection in order to maintain a well-balanced collection.
3. Since the library serves patrons with a wide range of ages, educational backgrounds, and reading skills, an attempt is made to select materials of varying complexity.
4. Given the proximity of Washington State University and the University of Idaho, the library will not attempt to purchase materials aimed at serious academic research at the graduate level.

#### I. Collection Maintenance:

1. Replacement:
  - i. Worn items still in heavy use may be rebound or replaced at the discretion of the Director or designee.

- ii. All items are not automatically replaced. Replacement depends on usage, whether the item is in print, the existence of similar materials in the collection, and the availability of newer materials.
2. Weeding:
  - i. In order to maintain the best possible collection weeding is continual.
  - ii. Items are discarded if they are outdated, if they no longer circulate, if there are more duplicate copies than are needed, or if they are in poor physical condition.
  - iii. Books of historical significance will be retained in the collection.
  - iv. A complete weeding of the entire collection shall be accomplished every five (5) years.
  - v. Items discarded are plainly marked "WITHDRAWN" and/or recycled.
  - vi. The Board of Trustees have authorized discarded material to be given to the Friends of WCL for their sale.
- J. Controversial Materials:
  1. The criteria for selecting controversial materials are the same as for any other materials.
  2. Controversial materials have no distinguishing labels and are shelved in the general collection.
  3. Please see "Intellectual Freedom Act" in this manual.