

LaFayette Public Library

Collection Development Policy

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1. Statement of policy purpose

Collection development is an on-going process that includes selection, de-selection, replacement of items, and other activities such as the acquisition of controversial materials and developing a procedure for library patrons to challenge a book. This policy is presented to inform and guide staff members participating in collection development activities, as well as to acquaint the public with the purpose and policies involved in selecting library materials in various formats.

This policy is designed to facilitate the mission of the LaFayette Public Library, which reads:

The LaFayette Public Library strives to enhance the quality of life in the LaFayette community by fostering a love for life-long learning.

The policy describes the scope and nature of the collection, names considerations by which selectors should make collection decisions, and outlines plans for evaluating the collection.

Collection Development Objectives

1. To meet the informational and recreational needs of the community.
2. To introduce children to the wonders of reading.
3. To support educational, civic, and cultural activities within the community.
4. To help people know about themselves and their world.
5. To give access to a variety of opinions on matters of current interest and to encourage freedom of expression.

2. Background

The LaFayette Public Library serves as a learning and educational center, as well as a source of leisure reading materials, for all residents of the community, regardless of race, age, creed, color, occupation, or financial position. The library is municipally funded, and has solid support from the local community.

The LaFayette community is located just south of the city of Syracuse, and has just under 5,000 residents. The location is primarily rural, with a small central district. With a median age of approximately 43, LaFayette skews much older than Syracuse at 31.7, but younger than Fayetteville at 49.2. Most residents are white, with a small minority population. Of note is the Onondaga Nation, located close to LaFayette. The Onondaga Nation School is part of the LaFayette Central School District. There is a small but significant number of homeschooling families in the area.

Collection needs include children's books, young adult books, community information, new books and bestsellers, school curriculum support, adult fiction and non-fiction, large-print materials, and reference materials. Audiovisual materials are in high demand, especially DVDs. Also, the library will collect items that relate to the Haudenosaunee and to the Onondaga Nation in particular.

The overall goal for collection development activities is to have a collection that is current, high-quality, contains accurate information, is entertaining, is desired by our patrons, and fosters a love of life-long learning.

3. Responsibility for Selection

The authority and responsibility for the selection of library materials is delegated to the library director and, under his or her direction, to staff who are qualified for this activity. Suggestions from all library patrons are welcome and are given consideration within the framework of the selection policy, as approved by the Board of Trustees.

The director has:

1. The duty to promote consistency in the selection and maintenance of materials.
2. Authority to approve or reject selection recommendations from selectors, other staff, and the public.
3. Authority to make final decisions on the withdrawal of circulating materials, the rebinding of books, repackaging of audiovisual materials, replacement orders, and the addition of gifts to the cataloged collection.
4. Authority to review collections in the Library and evaluate their contents.
5. Authority to initiate any weeding projects as a result of collection evaluations.

4. Funding/impact on collection

Each year, the Library Director uses the amount of funds available through the annual budget allocated to the Library to determine the allocation for purchases of book and non-book purchases. An additional small percentage of the total materials budget is set aside for system OverDrive purchases. The overall budget is suggested by the director, but approved by the LaFayette Town Council. If funding is reduced, priority will be given to adult fiction and children's materials. If funding is increased, priority will be given to adult and children's non-fiction.

5. Selection - general criteria

1. Reviews in professionally recognized sources are a primary source for materials selection. Examples include professional journals such as Library Journal, established sources of literary criticism such as the New York Times Review of Books, and winners of awards from groups or organizations with strong reviewing credentials. However, the lack of a review in these types of sources does not preclude an item from being selected.
2. Popular demand will be considered when purchasing or replacing materials, as well as the reputation of the author or publisher. However, patron requests for specific materials will not always result in purchase. The library cannot always include in its general collection all specialized materials desired by individuals. Interlibrary loan is used to meet this need.
3. Consideration of the purchase of multiple copies of library materials will be based on popular demand.
4. Since our patrons come from many educational backgrounds and are of all ages, we seek to select materials of varying complexities.
5. Materials for people with special needs will be purchased when possible. However, requests for specific resources will not always result in purchase. Attempts will be made to meet the patrons' needs through the resources of other libraries.
6. Selection of materials will be based on a review of the strengths and weaknesses of the collection. Materials will be purchased in various formats to accommodate the needs and preferences of library patrons.
7. Materials will be selected that present multiple points of view. The responsibility of the library is to serve all the community, not to

promote—and above all, not to censor—any particular political, moral, philosophical, or religious conviction or opinion. Accessibility to patrons with special needs should also be considered when purchasing materials.

8. Materials which have outlived their usefulness will be withdrawn from the library's collection.

9. The library does not promulgate beliefs or views, nor is the selection of any given book equivalent to endorsement of the viewpoint of the author expressed therein.

10. No materials shall be judged for exclusion by taking single passages or sections out of context and basing condemnation of that material on such lifted passages or sections.

11. No attempt will be made to supply textbooks used in area schools; however, a book will not be excluded because it is a textbook. Material that supports the curriculum in local schools will be considered, to respond to the needs of students.

12. The library does not attempt to provide the community with exhaustive professional, legal, or medical material, such as would be found in a special library collection. Selected materials should be suitable for the layperson, including well-informed laypeople.

13. Responsibility for reading by children rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection will not be inhibited by the possibility that books may inadvertently offend. Unlike school employees, the library staff does not act "in loco parentis" (in place of the parent.)

14. The Library shall seek to acquire materials relating to LaFayette and the surrounding areas. Special collections areas include books by local authors, yearbooks, and items of historical significance.

15. The library exists in a quickly changing world of new technologies. As new formats and technologies become available,

the library will collect in new formats when appropriate and feasible. Factors to consider in this decision include current demand, trends or growth in demand, and strengths and weaknesses of the format. The LaFayette Public Library, as a member of the Onondaga County Public Library system, also has access to a large number of materials in electronic formats via OverDrive. Those items are selected by trained system librarians.

6. Selection: Item-specific criteria

1. Relevance to present and projected community needs and demands
2. Suitability of subject
3. Timeliness and importance for contemporary society
4. Qualities conducive to critical thought and understanding
5. Competence and reputation of author and/or publishers
6. Importance as a document of time
7. Availability elsewhere within OCPL

7. Selection: Controversial materials

The LaFayette Public Library Board of Trustees upholds freedom of information for all as stated in the American Library Association (ALA) *Library Bill of Rights*, *The Freedom to Read Statement*, and the *Freedom to View Statement*.

The LaFayette Public Library has a responsibility to select a representative collection of materials including those on controversial subjects. The library makes an effort to supply information which will provide a variety and balance of opinion in order that individuals may freely examine issues. Materials are selected on the basis of content as a whole. The library does not advocate specific points of view or take an official stand on any public question. Instead, the library strives to provide information reflecting different points of view and representing all sides of controversial issues. The library does not exclude materials from the collection only because they are controversial.

The library includes materials that meet the general selection criteria which contain frank treatments of certain situations, language or illustrations that may be objectionable to some. Each work must be judged on its own merits in light of the audience for whom it is intended. The

library has an additional responsibility to protect the rights of mature or sophisticated readers by providing materials that are well balanced, authoritative and up to date.

8. Collection Maintenance: Weeding, replacements, and preservation

8A. Weeding

The LaFayette Public Library recognizes the need for continual re-evaluation of the collection in order to meet the needs of a changing society. In addition, the library's ability to purchase and store materials is limited by the size of its budget and its building. One way to maintain an active library collection of current interest to users is the removal of physically deteriorated or obsolete materials. Continued re-evaluation is closely related to the goals and responsibilities of libraries and is a valuable tool of collection building.

General guidelines and criteria for weeding, applicable to all formats:

Consider weeding the material if:

1. The material is neither current nor relevant.
2. The material has not been checked out within the last eight years.
3. The material is damaged.
4. The material is not the sole copy within the collection.
5. There is a newer edition available within the collection.

Consider keeping the material if:

6. The material retains educational significance and contributes to the breadth and depth of the collection.
7. The material is a necessary part of the collection and cost of replacement falls outside budgetary constraints.
8. The material is necessary to meet the demands of patrons (in the case of multiple copies).
9. The material is not a resource available online.
10. The material is a classic. Classics are generally not weeded.

8B. Replacements

The library does not automatically replace all materials that have been removed because of loss, damage, or wear. The need for replacement in each case is to be judged by such factors as:

1. The existence of adequate coverage of the subject area, especially if more current materials are available.
2. The potential demand (current or future) for the specific title. Local history items will be replaced if at all possible.
3. The appearance of the title in standard selection tools and bibliographies.

8C. Preservation

Some damaged library materials may be repaired. However, the library has limited time and materials available to undertake preservation treatments. Items with special interest in LaFayette will be considered more closely for potential repair. In some cases, the library may decide that it is more appropriate to simply replace or remove an item.

9. Gifts and Donations

The library welcomes gifts and donations in the form of materials or monetary funds. Gifts of materials may be accepted after examination by a staff member, with the understanding that the library reserves the right to use or dispose of the material as we see fit. Gifts will be evaluated by the same criteria used for purchased materials.

10. Collection Assessment

The purpose of collection assessment is to assure that the library's collection meets the current needs of the community by providing reliable, up-to-date, and attractive materials and other information sources. In subject areas that are controversial, it also assures that a variety of opinions are represented.

The collection will be assessed on a regular basis using standard measurements such as age of collection, circulation, checking against standard lists, patron input, and professional judgment. That information will be used to guide future acquisitions.

11. Intellectual Freedom

The LaFayette Public Library subscribes to the belief that the freedom to read is essential to our democracy, and that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society. LaFayette Public Library stands with the provisions of the Library Bill of Rights (Appendix 1) and the Freedom to Read statement from the American Library Association.

The LaFayette Public Library will not restrict or deny minors access to services and materials available to adults. Library employees do not act *in loco parentis*. Parents, guardians, or other adults that are in charge of the child have the responsibility and right to guide the values of their children. As such, parents, guardians, or other adults that are in charge of the child are responsible for the materials that their children borrow and should make decisions accordingly. The library recognizes and respects the right of parents to decide what their children read, and we leave that decision to them.

12. Request for Reconsideration

We are sorry if any material in our collection has offended you. However, the LaFayette Public Library subscribes to the Library Bill of Rights as adopted by the American Library Association June 27, 1967 and its subsequent amendments. This document reads, in part: "As a responsibility of library service, books and other library materials selected should be chosen for values of interest, information and enlightenment of all the people of the community the library serves." We realize that everyone's tastes are different, and that it is our responsibility to provide materials on a multitude of subjects and viewpoints, in many styles. The library is not endorsing any one position or viewpoint by providing the public with materials on that issue.

The choice of library materials by patrons is an individual or family matter. The library recognizes that some materials may be controversial or offensive to some people but maintains that individuals or families can apply their values only to themselves. No one can exercise censorship to restrict access to library materials by others.

Reconsideration Process:

1. If a library patron has concerns about library materials, the first step should be an informal discussion with the director. If the director is not available, assure the patron that their objection is important and schedule a time for the patron and director to meet in the immediate future. For the duration of this process, the material in question will remain in circulation in the library collection. The director will inform the Library Board of Trustees of the situation.
2. A concerned patron who is dissatisfied with earlier informal discussions will be offered a packet of materials that includes the library's mission statement and collection development policy, a reconsideration form, and the Library Bill of Rights. Only the director should give this packet out directly to the patron.

3. The patron will return the form, completely filled out, to the Library Director. Only signed and complete forms will be considered. The Library Director will acknowledge receipt of the form within one week.
4. The director, with professional assistance from other OCPL librarians, will review the reconsideration form and the material in question, to consider whether its selection follows the criteria stated in the collection policy.
5. Within 15 business days from the acknowledgement of the form, the director will make a decision and send a letter to the person who requested the reconsideration. The letter should state the reasons for the decision to either keep the library material on the shelf or remove the material from the collection.
6. If the individual is not satisfied with the decision, a written appeal may be submitted within the next 10 business days to the Library Board of Trustees.
7. The Board will discuss the issue at a time of their choosing. 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.
8. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to limit the length of public comments.
9. The decision of the board is final.

A copy of the request form without identifying patron information will be sent to the ALA Office of Intellectual Freedom.

13. Process for Policy Revision

This policy may be revised by the Library Board of Trustees at any time. The policy should be reviewed at regular intervals by the Board of Trustees, with the input of the library director.

Appendix 1.

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 which 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.

VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019.

Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

Downloaded from <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill> on 4/13/2022

Although the Articles of the *Library Bill of Rights* are unambiguous statements of basic principles that should govern the service of all libraries, questions do arise concerning application of these principles to specific library practices. See the documents designated by the Intellectual Freedom Committee as *Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights* at <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations>

The following two statements from the American Library Association further affirm and describe the LaFayette Public Library's position on intellectual freedom.

The Freedom to Read statement at

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement>

and the *Freedom to View statement* at

<https://www.ala.org/rt/vrt/professionalresources/vrtresources/freedomtoview>

Appendix 2.

Request for Reconsideration of Library Material

Patrons wishing to request the re-evaluation of a book or other library materials may do so using this form. The entire process of reconsideration is explained in section 12 of the library's collection development policy. Please return this form to the LaFayette Public Library Director. You will receive written confirmation that the form has been received within 5 business days. You will be contacted by the director with a decision within 15 business days after the initial 5 business days.

Your name: _____

Telephone: _____

Street Address:

City: _____

Zip Code: _____

Email address _____

You represent: (please check)

Yourself

An organization

Name of organization, if applicable:

Type of Material: (please check)

- Book or eBook
- CD (Music or other)
- Magazine/Newspaper
- Movie
- Audio recording
- Other (please describe)

Author / Artist: _____

Title: _____

Publication Date:

Publisher:

1. Did you personally read (view, listen) and examine the entire item? If not the whole item, what parts?

2. What brought this resource to your attention?

3. What do you feel is the purpose of the resource, and who is the intended audience?

4. To what in the item do you object? (Please be specific with pages and passages.)

5. What do you feel might be the result of using this item?

6. Have you read any reviews of this material?

7. Do you feel there is any value in this item?

8. For what age group would you recommend this item?

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

10. What action are you requesting the committee consider?

Date: _____

Signature of Complainant: _____