

Collection Development Policy

Reed City Public Library 1/08

The Collection Development Policy has four purposes:

1. To state the principles of selection upon which staff choose materials
2. To state the principles by which staff choose materials for de-selection
3. To guide staff in acquiring a useful balanced collection based on community needs
4. To set guidelines for dealing with challenges to collection materials from the public

Community Profile

The Reed City Public Library is a city library supported through penal fines and city monies. In addition to the City of Reed City, the library contracts services for the following townships: Richmond, Cedar, Green, Lincoln, Pinora, Hersey, and Hersey Village. Its patrons are primarily rural residents holding high school diplomas or higher.

Mission Statement

The Reed City Public Library actively connects people of all ages and backgrounds in the Crossroads community to the world.

We provide books, technology, programs, and other resources for lifelong learning, professional development, recreation and leisure.

We offer excellent service in a welcoming and pleasant environment.

Collection Goals and Selection Criteria

The Library's first priority is to build a customer-centered collection that responds to the current needs and interests of our community, rather than building historical and rare material collections — except for the acquisition of materials of both past and current significance to the Reed City area. It must be acknowledged that collection development at the Reed City Public Library faces two constraints, those of budget and space. For these reasons, RCPL must strive to get the maximum usage out of a minimum number of materials and that all acquisitions must be considered in the light of these concerns.

The following guidelines apply to most selection decisions. Other factors may be taken into consideration and will be outlined further in this document. The importance or weight of a particular guideline will vary from one acquisition to another.

- Community needs, interests and demands
- Reputation and qualifications of the creator(s), publisher(s) or producer(s)
- Literary, artistic and technical values
- Significance of the author's work to the Reed City area
- Availability for purchase
- Availability through other sources such as area libraries and the Michigan Electronic Library
- Format (appropriateness and durability)
- Recommendations of reviews
- Price
- Suitability for intended users
- Number and nature of requests from library patrons

The Reed City Public Library values the input of its patrons. Any patron may suggest an item he or she would like to see added to the collection by submitting a "Request for Purchase" form. They may make suggestions for any genre or format. The Director will evaluate each suggestion using the guidelines in the collection development policy to decide whether or not the item will be added to the collection. The patron will be informed of that decision if they provide their name and contact information on the request form.

Specific collection concerns and priorities will be addressed section by section.

Adult Fiction

Usage statistics show that adult fiction is used primarily for recreational reading and should reflect the tastes and desires of patrons. An attempt is made to purchase books representing virtually all categories of fiction. Particular attention is paid to keeping up to date on the recently published works of popular authors. The director will maintain a list of popular authors, in all genres, whose works will automatically be purchased. This list will be evaluated and revised once a year. Because of the abundance of available fiction titles, the library uses various criteria including popular measures, published reviews, literary merit and author reputation for selecting titles.

The library will work to complete fiction series as much as is possible within budget constraints. This means that if the first two books in a series are purchased and meet with popular approval as reflected in circulation statistics,

the library commits to purchasing the following volumes as well or the first two items will be removed from the collection.

The library recognizes its role as a center for cultural life and as a supplement to the local public schools and colleges and an effort will be made to maintain classic works of literature as valuable pieces of our cultural heritage. Michigan and local authors will be given special consideration as well to help encourage the art of writing and to promote Michigan.

The library also serves a large senior population and a certain portion of the monthly adult fiction budget will be allocated to the purchase of large print items to ensure a steady supply of new items in this format.

Due to space and budgetary constraints, multiple copies of items will only be purchased when the demand prior to the publication of a certain item is particularly high.

Items that can be expected to have especially high or consistently high circulation over the course of their inclusion in the collection will be purchased as hard covers whenever possible. Items with popularity that is currently high, but not projected to remain so, will be purchased as paperbacks in anticipation of their short life in the collection. Buying less expensive paperbacks of certain items allows the library to buy a greater number of popular materials. Items will also occasionally be purchased in paperback when they are not available otherwise or when filling older gaps in fiction series.

Adult Non-Fiction

The library recognizes its role in providing vital information to its patron population, as well as the need to supplement the collections of local schools. As such the library resolves to provide balanced and quality information about a broad range of topics to fulfill the information needs of its patrons. In this case, balanced will be defined as supplying items that represent the opinions of all sides of a subject. Quality information is defined by the extent and scientific nature of the research that supports it and/or the common acceptance of the theories contained within those items by acknowledged experts. Non-fiction items will also be evaluated for their clarity and readability. The purchase of expensive and highly specialized materials is to be avoided. The library may attempt to borrow such materials via interlibrary loan if so requested by a patron.

The library will place special emphasis on providing up-to-date information about health and medical conditions and job skills, as well as Michigan law as it relates to everyday lives. These books often offer information of dire importance in the lives of our patrons. The library will also strive to acquire materials on Reed City area history while providing materials about Michigan history and culture to give local materials context. Recognizing the popularity

of cookbooks and craft books (as well as the reputation of the library as a repository for a variety of cookbooks) the library will continue to offer quality and up-to-date items on these subjects. The library acknowledges the importance of continued professional development for library staff, individuals who home school, and area teachers and will attempt to purchase materials to further this goal as well.

Periodicals

Recognizing the availability of quality scholarly journals through the Michigan Electronic Library, the library purchases periodicals primarily for entertainment value or those that offer information for the average person. Periodicals chosen for their entertainment value will be selected on the quality of the format, writing and their popularity. Periodicals chosen to provide information will be selected by the quality of the format, writing, reliability of information and the demand for the subject matter. Due to space constraints, backlogs of magazines will not be kept past six months except in the case of *Consumer Reports*.

Because so much state, national and international news is available online as well as through television and other formats, the Reed City Public Library purchases subscriptions to local newspapers to meet patron demands that cannot be filled by other means. Newspapers are chosen by their coverage of local events and relevance to the Reed City area. While the library would like to keep backlogs of local newspapers, due to space constraints it is unable to store papers or afford the equipment and human resources required to convert them to other formats. Copies of the *The Pioneer* are available through the Big Rapids library. Other newspapers may be accessed online or through other libraries.

Reference

Due to budget constraints and the availability of free, quality databases through the Michigan Electronic Library, the Reed City Public Library maintains a minimal reference collection including dictionaries, thesauri, atlases, various reference volumes, and two sets of the *World Book Encyclopedia*. Volumes from the older set of encyclopedia are available for check out. The other, newer set is to remain in the library so that any patron may consult it during library hours.

The oldest set of encyclopedias will be replaced once every five years. A portion of dictionaries and thesauri will be replaced every five years as well, though not in the same year so as to avoid depleting the materials budget.

Special emphasis is placed on purchasing reference volumes designed to aid in test preparation for both educational and trade services tests such as General Educational Development and the Real Estate License exam.

Children's Collection **Juvenile Easy (JE)**

The Library recognizes the vital importance of encouraging early literary skills for success in later life and takes care to select children's materials of the highest quality. Picture books will be chosen for the quality of the writing and illustrations, the reputation of the author/illustrator, the value of the message, appeal to children and the relationship of the text to illustration. Chapter books serve an important bridge between picture books and more advanced reading. They will be selected using similar criteria as picture books. Because of the hard wear that is inevitable in any children's collection, JE items will be purchased as hard covers or other sturdier bindings whenever possible.

High priority for purchase is given to books of use and value to parents, teachers and other people working with children. The Library pledges to purchase a copy of the Caldecott Medal Winner and Newberry Medal Winner books each year. Copies of the Caldecott and Newberry Honor Books will be purchased whenever they meet collection development standards and the budget allows.

Juvenile (J)

J Fiction is evaluated with the aid of published reviews and the consideration of a number of factors including literary quality, author reputation, receipt of literary awards, theme and popular appeal. Every effort will be made to purchase titles in a variety of genres. The library is very much aware of the importance of popular series to serve as a lure for reluctant readers and will often purchase fiction titles that are not notable for their literary quality or artistic merit, but have substantial popular appeal.

Some items may be included that might not be considered appropriate by all adults for all children. While some books are too mature for one child, other children may be ready for them. Only each child and his or her parents can decide what material is suitable for that child to read.

Young Adult (YA)

A Young Adult collection has been developed for the purpose of meeting the recreational reading and informational needs of the middle school and high school age population. Materials are chosen from published reviews, book lists from established sources and from the recommendations of young people and parents. The collection consists primarily of YA fiction from many genres. Some adult titles of special interest to young adults are also included. As with adult and other children's series, every effort is made to complete YA series once the library has committed to them.

The young adult user of the Library has access to the entire collection. Limitations on the reading materials of young adults are left to the discretion of their parents.

Non-Fiction

Elementary and high school libraries serve the curriculum needs of the students, but are under increasing strain. While not attempting to follow all the changes in curriculum, the Reed City Public Library does recognize the need to provide a wide variety of cultural

and recreational reading matter that can aid students seeking to complete their assignments outside school hours and to aid home schoolers.

Non-fiction resources will be chosen for the quality of information presented and the clarity of that presentation. Hardcover and other durable formats are to be preferred.

Audio/Visual

The Reed City Public Library maintains a collection of recorded books both on tape and CD and recorded film in both VHS and DVD formats. The library does not yet have a collection of recorded music. The primary purpose of these collections is to provide entertainment to our patrons.

Movies

Considering the vast array of genres and the wide variety of tastes in movies today, the library cannot meet the needs of every patron and so the library attempts to purchase quality items that are harder to find or in the greatest demand in three main categories:

1. Quality family films for entertainment
2. Documentaries for educational purposes
3. Appealing classic works

Quality, appeal and educational worthiness will be evaluated through the use of reviews taken from a variety of sources including those published for professionals and for consumers online.

As VHS tapes are falling out of use as a format, the library will no longer purchase VHS items, instead focusing its efforts on purchasing quality DVD materials. VHS tapes given to the library as gifts may still be added to the collection, however, if they meet collection development standards.

Books on Tape or CD

Recorded books are a relatively expensive format and for this reason the utmost care is taken to purchase materials of the highest standards at the most economical price. Criteria used to evaluate recorded materials include literary quality, appeal and the skill of the narration. Professional reviews and consumer reviews available online will be used to help determine these qualities. In the past, the majority of items purchased were for adults, but the library has responded to the increasing popularity of the audio format with children and young adults by purchasing more items for these age groups.

The library's audio collection is relatively small and has not been made available to other libraries through interlibrary loan. For this reason the Reed City Library is unable to borrow audio materials from other libraries. Special efforts will be made to purchase items in greatest demand by patrons to help offset this lack of a wider selection. Recorded books must still meet the same quality standards of other materials.

Popular titles in printed materials are often purchased as recorded books on the premise that they have already proven their worth and will be continue to circulate well in the

different format. The majority of recorded books purchased are fiction works, although non-fiction works of great popularity or appeal may be added.

Purchasing through pre-selection plans from major vendors is helpful in providing quality, up-to-date items at a more economical cost. The library uses such plans for these reasons despite the narrower choices available through pre-select plans. Despite the declining use of cassette tapes in the wider world, many members of the Reed City area still use this format so books on tape are still purchased where especially economical deals are available. Those ordered through selection plans are books on CD.

Selection Responsibility

The library recognizes the value of input from library employees who have first hand contact with patrons. While final responsibility for the purchase of materials resides with the Director, the input of staff members is encouraged and sought to help defray the burden of the selection of the entire collection and to help provide a more balanced collection to patrons. This means that staff members may be asked to consult professional reviews and make recommendations for collection acquisitions.

Acquisitions

The Library welcomes gift books in good condition. Once accepted, the donated materials will be checked to see if they meet the library's standards of selection. If donated items are not added to the library's collection, the library reserves the right to sell them at library book sales or to otherwise dispose of them. Arrangements can also be made to reimburse the library for materials purchased and added on request. These titles are also subject to the same selection criteria as any other item.

Collection Evaluation and Assessment

A responsive library collection is one that is regularly assessed by library staff so they may deal with changing usage patterns. This is done so that weaknesses — that is holes in the collection as well as areas with many underused items — may be located and resources allocated to deal with these issues.

The Reed City Public Library assesses its collections using data from three categories:

Age and timeliness of materials:

- The median age of the materials in a particular collection or within non-fiction, the median age of materials on a particular topic
- The range of publication dates in a particular collection or within a subject matter
- Comparison of materials to those currently available

Use:

Circulation numbers in a particular collection or within a subject matter, including total number of check-outs and renewals, most recent check-out date, hold requests and interlibrary loan requests

Percent of standard titles or items:

This area is measured by consulting “best” lists and comparing them to titles in our collection. Different lists will be used for various areas.

Deselection

In a small library the constant evaluation of the collection is a necessity. As the library continues to collect new items, our space needs will continue to be challenged. The most cost-effective way to stretch shelf space is through the removal of underused and outdated materials. Leaving rarely used materials on the shelves decreases rather than increases patron satisfaction. Removing obsolete titles and materials in poor physical condition makes it easier for patrons to choose from the titles that remain. The staff continuously evaluates materials, replacing or repairing those that are worn or damaged and withdrawing items no longer current or in demand. The final decision for deselection resides with the Director.

At least once a year, each area of the collection will be singled out so the materials contained within can be evaluated thoroughly and any items missed in day-to-day weeding can be removed. Depending upon condition, materials withdrawn from the collections as part of the evaluation process may be offered for sale in the book sale.

Items considered for removal will be judged on the following criteria:

- Popularity/usage of the item
- Coverage of the topic within the collection
- Quality of the information
- Availability of the item for replacement
- Cost or rarity of the item
- Availability of newer materials on the topic

Reconsideration of Library Materials

The Reed City Public Library is a public institution serving a range of individuals of differing backgrounds and beliefs. As such it is committed to retaining a similarly broad array of materials to serve our patrons. We support the Library Bill of Rights as presented by the ALA (Appendix #1) and the freedom of choice of all people.

We recognize, however, that some materials may be considered objectionable to some individuals. If a patron of our library or another community member has a concern about a material, they will be referred to the Library Director. The Library Director will

1. Provide a copy of the official Reed City Public Library Collection Development Policy and form “For the Reconsideration of a Library Material” (Appendix # 2) to the concerned party.
2. Explain the process of the reconsideration of a library material as related in the Collection Development Policy.

3. Answer any questions relating to the policy or process.
4. Fill out a "Statement of Concern" (Appendix # 3) regarding a library material and file this in the appropriate place.

If after the Collection Development Policy has been explained, the concerned party wishes to proceed with the reconsideration process, the concerned party will be asked to fill out and return the form "For the Reconsideration of a Library Material." The purpose of this form is to record the necessary information relating to the concerned party's objection, including contact information and specific information about the nature of the objection. *Until this form has been completed and submitted to the Director the challenge process cannot proceed.* While an item is being reviewed it will remain on the shelf.

When the form has been completed and returned to the Library Director, he or she will take the written concerns into consideration and evaluate the item in relation to the Collection Development Policy. Is the inclusion of the item in line with the library's Collection Development Policy? The Library Director will inform the concerned party of the decision, in writing, within one month of the submission of the "Form for Reconsideration of Library Material." The Library Director will also inform the American Library Association Office of Intellectual Freedom of the request for reconsideration.

If the concerned party is still not satisfied, he or she may request *in writing* a hearing for the Reconsideration of a Library Material. The hearing will be open to the public and will include the input of the Library Board of Trustees, the Director and the concerned party. The concerned party may relate their objections, the Library Director will respond then any member of the public may speak, after which the Library Board of Trustees will debate the inclusion of the item in terms of the Collection Development Policy. Minutes will be taken throughout the hearing for public record. The final decision will be submitted in writing to the concerned party.

This process shall be documented by the Library Director and all written materials, including the Statement of Concern, the Form for Reconsideration of Library Materials, a copy of the letter detailing the Director's decision, a copy of the hearing minutes, a copy of the final decision, and any other written material relating to the initial concern shall be retained in the library's files.

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.

Appendix # 2

Form for the Reconsideration of Library Materials

The Reed City Public Library Board of Trustees in Reed City, Michigan, has delegated the responsibility for selection and evaluation of library/educational resources to the Library Director as laid out in the Reed City Public Library Collection Development Policy and has established reconsideration procedures to address concerns about those resources. Completion of this form is the first step in those procedures. If you wish to request reconsideration of a library resource, please return the completed form to the Director of the Reed City Public Library, 410 West Upton Ave., Reed City, MI 49677.

Your Name _____

Date _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Phone _____

Do you represent yourself? ____ Organization? ____

1. Resource on which you are commenting:

____ Book ____ Textbook ____ Video ____ Display

____ Magazine ____ Library Program ____ Audio Recording

____ Newspaper ____ Electronic information/network (please specify)

____ Other _____

Title _____

Author/Producer _____

2. What brought this resource to your attention?
3. Have you read/watched/listened to the entire resource?
4. What concerns you about the resource? (use other side or additional pages if necessary)
5. Are there resource(s) you suggest to provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic?

Appendix #3

Statement of Concern regarding a Library Material

Date:

Name of concerned party:

Item of concern:

Issue:

Directors' Action: