

Materials Selection Policy

[Approved at March 19, 2013 Board Meeting,
as part of the MPLD Public Policy and Procedures Manual]
[Revision approved at March 17, 2015 Board Meeting]

General Policy on Selection

In the selection of books and other materials, the MPLD recognizes its obligation as a public institution serving the needs of a large group of people with varied backgrounds, interests, points of view and purposes. Materials selection should conform to the interests and needs of the community without being restricted by them.

The Material Selection Policy was drafted to support the Library's Mission Statement and to serve the service responses that the library has identified as most appropriate for its role in the community.

Types of Materials Collected

The Library collects print, non-print, and electronic materials. The print materials include, but are not limited to books, periodicals (magazines and newspapers), pamphlets, and microforms. Non-print materials include, but are not limited to DVDs, CDs, on-line databases and videogames. Electronic resources include, but are not limited to ebooks, digital music, magazines, films, and audio books, as well as subscription access to databases. The types of library materials collected are dictated by:

- Patron demand for new formats
- Anticipation of future demand for new formats
- Equipment and media obsolescence
- Cost of purchase and of processing
- Durability of media for multiple uses
- The depth and breadth of popular titles available in a new format.

Selection Practices

Library staff members are assigned selection areas and assigned a budget to purchase materials for their areas. Items for purchase are identified through:

- Reviews in professional journals
- Retrospective bibliographies from reputable sources
- Publishers' advertisements and catalogs
- Presentations by publishers' representatives and vendors
- Patron requests
- Recommendation of colleagues

Patron requests are ordered if the item meets the criteria used for selection. All purchases are subject to the constraints of the materials budget.

General Selection Criteria

The questions that selectors must ask and the criteria they use in choosing or not choosing items for the collection include, but are not limited to:

Does the collection need this item to serve the public?

- Relevance to local lifestyles and interests
- Usefulness for students in local schools and colleges
- Representative of a special or balancing point of view
- Ability to strengthen developing or weak areas of the current collection

Would this item interest the library users?

- Patron requests
- Circulation data
- Current popularity or newsworthiness
- Items of local interest, including works by local authors and performers

Will this item be used enough to justify owning it rather than obtaining the item through interlibrary loan?

Are there physical limitations to the item under consideration?

- Physical quality of construction and/or appearance
- Physical limitations of the library building and shelving equipment
- Appropriateness of available format for local users

Does the intellectual quality of the item warrant purchasing?

- Favorable critical reviews
- Awards for excellence
- Inclusion on standard or recommended lists
- Renown or popularity of the creators of an item
- Reputation as a classic of its type
- Currency of the information contained in an item

Can we afford this item?

- Purchase price
- Repair cost
- Item is a set of many essential irreplaceable parts
- Cost is high relative to likelihood of theft or damage
- Ordering one item obliges a series of purchases

Duplicate copies of popular materials may be ordered if the selector or collection manager feels that the interest and future usage warrants doing so. Once the anticipated interest ends, the multiple copies should be evaluated for de-selection. If long-term demand can be expected to be steady, then duplicate copies may be put into storage to replace the circulating copy when it has worn out.

Popularity in one format may justify buying the work in other formats including, but not limited to DVDs, Blu-ray DVDs, large print, paperbacks, CDs, downloadable/ streaming formats, and various videogame platforms.

Specific Selection Criteria

In each area of the collection, the criteria listed under General Selection Criteria are to be applied, as they are appropriate.

The Library maintains circulation statistics on segments of the collection and uses this information in determining which areas should be strengthened. Comparing the collection to lists of recommended titles or to the collections of comparable libraries are methods used to analyze the collection for further development.

Textbooks

Although the Library seeks to support local school curricula, the Library does not purchase the textbooks for local schools and colleges. Schools may leave a repository collection of textbooks, which will be treated as a special reserve collection to help students doing homework. A book will not necessarily be excluded for purchase because it is a textbook as long as it meets other selection guidelines.

Foreign Languages

In addition to foreign language dictionaries and learning aids, the Library will collect works in a non-English language when there is an established community in the district that speaks that language. The intent of such a collection is to make necessary and current information accessible, to provide entertainment, and to help improve literacy in the native language with the goal of making literacy in English easier. The Library collects aids to learning English as a second language aimed at general non-English-speaking students and also aimed at students from the local non-English-speaking community. Requests for items in languages that do not represent a significant local community of speakers are generally filled through interlibrary loan and are not purchased. When the demand for materials in a specific language increases, the library will evaluate beginning a collection in that language.

Although library staff selects for all other library collection areas, the library may choose to subscribe to a selection service for non-English materials when there are no staff members who can effectively select for that collection. The service must be able to adapt their choices to our local community based on requests from the library and the materials provided must conform to the library's other selection criteria.

Genealogy and Local History

Selection for the Library's Genealogy and Local History Collection is intended to support beginning level research. The collection includes major published source materials required for independent research in genealogy. All informational works on the city, township, and county of McHenry are purchased. Works on the counties bordering McHenry County in both Illinois and Wisconsin are extensively purchased. General genealogical reference works for Illinois counties, the state of Illinois, and the entire United States are purchased. Resources on foreign countries that have been the source of immigrant populations represented in the McHenry area are selectively collected. The library also purchases handbooks on how to do genealogy research for this collection and some of these handbooks are also purchased for the circulating collection.

The Library maintains a collection of newspaper clippings and of photographs associated with local history. The Library actively collects yearbooks for the McHenry high schools. It will add

yearbooks for the McHenry grade schools if they are available but does not seek them out.

General interest genealogical online databases are offered by the library. The library posts photographs, which were developed from donated glass plate negatives, and scanned copies of the yearbooks it has collected on its website. While it does not seek to increase its physical photo collection, it will accept and may solicit scans of photos with local historical interest from the public to post on its website.

The Library purchased the core of its genealogical collection from a private individual and at the same time agreed to house and interfile part of the McHenry County, Illinois Genealogy Society (MCIGS) collection with its own collection. The agreement with MCIGS was made with the understanding that the library would focus on Illinois genealogy materials while the Society would collect materials on other geographic regions, such as US states and foreign countries.

The Library has also entered into an agreement with the British Interest Group of Wisconsin and Illinois to accept their collection as a special collection housed within the Genealogy and Local History Collection.

The genealogy librarian may choose to relocate duplicate works or older handbooks owned by the library from the genealogy room to the circulating collection or remove from the collection permanently. If these works are owned by the genealogical societies they will be returned to the owning society.

Works by Local Authors, Musicians, etc.

Since works created by McHenry residents or people with close connections with the community are likely to be of interest to patrons of the library, they will be added to the circulating collection as well as the local history collection. Copies in the circulating collection will be treated like any other circulating item and may be weeded when demand has diminished. However, if there is no copy in the Local History Collection, the last copy will be moved to Local History. The Library should not weed works by local authors, musicians, etc. in the Local History Collection.

Periodicals, including Comics

The Library's periodical titles are selected on the basis of popularity and browsability. When possible, periodicals are ordered and maintained through a subscription agency. Exceptions are ordered direct from the publisher. Periodical subscriptions are reviewed once a year when the subscription payment for the following year is due. Suggestions for new titles or for discontinuing current subscriptions that are no longer of interest are considered at that time.

In addition to the general selection criteria, the following criteria are preferred:

- Is the format appropriate for our collections? (Inappropriate materials would include works that are intended to be written in.)
- Is the periodical available from other libraries subject to the restrictions of copyright law?

Standing Orders

Materials that are published as a series may be placed on standing order if they are either so popular that the library cannot risk missing an issue or they contain information that must be current to be useful to the public. A standing order may be set up so that not every newly

updated issue is sent, either because of the cost involved in buying every issue or because the information does not require such frequent updating. Standing orders will be reviewed regularly and reconsidered for purchase if the character of the serial publication changes so that it might no longer meet selection criteria.

Microforms

Microfilm or microfiche may be purchased when the original documents are not otherwise available, would be too bulky to store easily, or are not used often but are of permanent interest. Generally, the library's microform collection is used for genealogy and local history research.

Downloadable/Streaming Services

The library subscribes to services that offer access to downloadable and/or streaming materials, which are selected and weeded by the companies that offer the services. When content is provided by third-party vendors, the library might not have any control over the content provided though it will make suggestions for adding or removing content.

Online Databases (citation and full-text)

The Library provides access to online databases through its web page. Whenever it is affordable, the library will provide remote access to these databases so that patrons can conveniently access them from their homes as well as at the library.

Selection criteria specific to online databases include:

- Ease in searching
- Remote access in addition to access in the library
- Ability for multiple users
- Cost relative to likely use

Audiovisual (AV) Materials

The size and shape of packaging or the number of independent parts of audiovisual materials may be considered in the selection process as well as determining what medium is the predominant for circulation/cataloging. In certain cases, an item will or will not be purchased due to ancillary media, i.e. books containing CD music or multiple CD-ROMs.

The De-Selection or "Weeding" Process

A commitment to the quality of the collection requires that the collection be weeded regularly of items that no longer meet the criteria for selection. The weeding process also identifies items that need to be replaced due to poor condition. Items are weeded regarding the following criteria:

- Lack of currency of information
- Inaccuracy or no longer relevant due to changes in the field
- Loss of public interest in a subject or the creators of an item
- Damage or wear through use

When an item is withdrawn, the appropriate selector will determine whether a replacement copy

should be purchased. If the item is removed because it is out of date, the selector is responsible for identifying more current titles in the subject area to replace the withdrawn items. Any staff member may pull damaged or worn items for selectors to consider withdrawing from the collection. Selectors are responsible for identifying items to withdraw for reasons other than physical condition.

If there are duplicate copies of titles that requires only one copy and the selector anticipates long-term use and difficulty in replacement or repurchase of that title, then duplicates will be put into storage instead of being withdrawn.

Donations and Gifts

1. The decision to include gift materials in the Library collection shall be based on the following considerations:

- The materials must meet the Library's selection policy standards
- The physical condition should be good to excellent
- The items donated should meet the needs and/or demands of patrons

Library staff will evaluate all donated items. If an item is not needed or is not appropriate for the collection, the selector will decide on how to dispose of it.

2. Monetary gifts may be designated for the purchase of particular materials at the request of the donor and with the approval of the Director and the Board of Library Trustees. All unrestricted monetary gifts shall be deposited in a memorial or gift fund under the direction of the Board of Library Trustees.
3. These gifts shall be appropriately acknowledged but acknowledgment will not state an estimate of value.
4. The Board shall recognize with a memorial to the Library the death of a current board or staff member, his/her spouse, child or parent. In addition, the Board shall acknowledge "retired" Board members with ten or more years of service. If books or other objects are purchased, they should be appropriately marked.
5. Materials given by individuals, groups or organization and specified to be kept together as a separate collection will not be accepted.

Reconsideration of Materials

The Library purchases materials on a variety of topics including controversial ones. This is done in an effort to present many sides of an issue. Since the Library seeks to represent a wide variety of viewpoints and interests, some materials will be inappropriate for some individuals.

If a patron questions the inclusion of an item in the collection for any reason, he or she may request that the library reconsider including that title in the collection or in a certain part of the collection. (We need time periods for events, board meeting, set up ad hoc committee, etc.)

- The patron will be asked to fully fill out a "Request for Reconsideration" form.
- The form will go to the Executive Director to evaluate the request and decide on the

Library's response. The Executive Director will usually set up an ad hoc committee that usually includes the Collection Manager and the selector for the area the item is from.

- The Executive Director will write to the patron outlining the library's response to the request.
- The Executive Director will inform the Library Board of the request and the response.

Since the process may require that the item be read or viewed by several staff members or that the Executive Director consult with Library Board members, even a reviewing a single item may require as much as three weeks. We will inform the individual making the request if the process requires a longer time than this.

**McHenry Public Library District
Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials**

Request initiated by _____ **Date** _____

Street Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

Phone _____ **email**

_____ **Book** _____ **Periodical** _____ **Movie** _____ **Music**

_____ **Other** (explain) _____

Do you represent: ☐ **Yourself**

____ **An Organization** _____
(Name)

1. What do you object to about the work? Please be specific; cite pages, etc.

2. Did you read/listen to/view the entire work? _____

If not, what parts did you read/ listen to/view?

What do you perceive to be the harm that can come from reading this book?

Who do you think is the intended audience for the book or work?

Was there a theme for the work? If so, what was it?

Are you aware of how the work was reviewed or what literary critics had to say about the work?

What would you like the library to do about this work?

_____ **Transfer it to a more mature part of the library collection**

_____ **Transfer it from Youth Collection to Adult Collection**

_____ **Remove it from the library collection**

Is there another work you would recommend to take the place of this item or to present a balancing point of view on the topic?