

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

I. Introduction

The Needham Free Public Library serves a population of over 29,000. Over 18,000 people are registered borrowers. Through its collection, the Library seeks to support the recreational, intellectual, cultural, and information needs of the community. The collection also complements the collections of the town's school libraries.

II. Intellectual Freedom

The Needham Public Library Board of Trustees has voted to adopt the American Library Association "Bill of Rights," with the various attendant amendments and interpretations ("Access for Children," "Free Access to Libraries for Minors"), and the American Film and Video Association's "Freedom to View" statements as the basis for the library's materials selection policy. Copies of these documents may be had on request.

III. Responsibility for Materials Selection

Responsibility for materials selection rests ultimately with the Board of Trustees. The Board delegates to the Director, as its professional expert, authority to operate within the policies determined by the Board. Responsibilities may be delegated to other staff members.

IV. Selection Goals and Guidelines

The library staff makes library collection development decisions based on experience in working with the library's patrons, on personal judgment and expertise, and on evaluation of reviews in library and other media reviewing sources.

The following criteria are considered in adding or withdrawing material from the collection: Popular demand; community needs and interests, as determined by library use; current interest and usefulness; relationship and value to the collection; cost; quality; and availability through intra-network transfer or inter-library loan.

The library will strive to present materials that:

- (1) Enrich and support the recreational, informational, educational needs of the users, taking into consideration their varied interests, abilities, and learning styles.
- (2) Represent differing viewpoints on a subject.
- (3) Reflect the problems, aspirations, attitudes, and ideals of a pluralistic society.
- (4) Support business, cultural, recreational, and civic activities in the community.
- (5) Stimulate self-understanding and growth.
- (6) Enhance job-related knowledge and skills.
- (7) Increase knowledge of and participation in the affairs of the community, the country, and the world.

V. Patron requests and Gifts

Patron recommendations for the purchase of library materials are carefully considered. These materials will be added to the collection, if they meet the above criteria. Every effort will be made to acquire, through network transfer and inter-library loan, materials not purchased, if requesting patron is a Needham resident.

Gifts of books and other materials are accepted with the understanding that they may be used or disposed of, as the library staff determines is appropriate. Gift titles are subject to the basic standards of selection. Replacements and duplicate copies are added to the collection, if needed and if space allows. The library does not provide evaluations of gifts for tax deductions or other purposes.

VI. Weeding

In order to maintain a collection which is current, reliable, in good condition, well-used, and which relates to the needs and interests of the residents of Needham, materials are withdrawn on a systematic and continuing basis. Materials are withdrawn when they are judged to be dated, inaccurate, seldom used, in poor condition, or otherwise no longer appropriate.

VII. Collection Development for Children and Young Adults

The Children's and Young Adult's collections are carefully chosen for children of all ages and abilities, with the emphasis on materials which entertain, stimulate the imagination, develop reading ability, and enable children to learn about the world around them. Materials are purchased in print and nonprint formats. Although the collections do contain materials of use in completing school assignments, they are not designed to provide school textbooks or other materials which support only the school curriculum.

A small collection of materials specifically selected for ' young adults is maintained by the library. Materials are selected as a bridge to the adult collection. Novels and recreational materials are selected because of their special appeal for this age group. In general, the young adult collection is a browsing collection.

Children and Young Adults are not limited to the special collections selected for them. They are encouraged to make full use of the entire collection to the extent that their interests and capabilities allow.

VIII. Use of Materials

The collection of the Needham Free Public Library is available to all Massachusetts residents. Materials are not marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of contents, no materials are marked to restrict their use by ages, and no materials are sequestered except to protect valuable items from injury or theft.

Responsibility for the use of materials by children and young adults rests with their parents or legal guardians. The selection of material for the adult collection and access to it is not restricted by the fact that children may obtain materials that their parents consider objectionable.

IX. Public Administration Research Collection

The Public Administration Research Collection (called the Archives) in the Public Library was established by the town of Needham (Town By-Law 2.8.1 and 2.8.2) for the “use of town officers and committees, civil organizations and individuals of the town engaged in research in matters pertaining to governmental and social problems, particularly relating to the Town of Needham.” The Archivist reports to the Director of the Library under the jurisdiction of the Board of Trustees of the Library.

It is the mission of the Archives to collect and preserve, in accordance with preservation standards, materials of abiding historical interest to the town. These materials are collected from town departments (see above) and from private individuals, businesses, organizations, and institutions of the town. The Archives collects only materials that support its mission and prefers that the materials be donated in an outright Deed of Gift, or placed on Permanent Loan in the repository. The Archives reserves the right to de-accession donated items when they no longer serve our mission, but will notify the donor before doing this.

It is the responsibility of the Archives to advise the researcher that manuscripts cannot be used for publication without due regard to common law rights, literary rights, property rights, and libel laws, and that the user assumes legal responsibility for observing these rights. A Statement of Access to the Archives will be given to all users, who must also read and sign the Rules and Regulations, signifying acceptance of these rules, before doing research.

X. Reconsideration of Library Materials

The library recognizes its obligation to provide as wide a spectrum of materials as possible. Selection cannot be restricted by the possibility that certain materials might be considered objectionable by some users on moral, religious, political, or other grounds. Recognizing that a diversity of materials may result in some requests for reconsideration, the following procedures have been developed to assure that objections or complaints are handled in an attentive and consistent manner.

- (1) The person with the request for reconsideration should be referred to the Director.
 - (a) The Director will discuss the library’s Collection Development Policy with the person.
 - (b) The person may be asked to fill out a “Citizen’s Request For Reconsideration” form.
- (2) If the person is not satisfied after talking to the Director, he/she may request a hearing with the Board of Trustees.

Approved January 1993
Amended February 13, 1996

**CITIZENS REQUEST
FOR
RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS**

AUTHOR _____

TITLE _____

PUBLISHER (if known) _____

AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIAL KIND OF MEDIA (videocassette, dvd, compact disc, book-on-cd, book-on-tape, playaway, audiocassette, etc.)

REQUEST INITIATED BY:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____ TOWN _____

ZIPCODE _____ TELEPHONE NUMBER _____

COMPLAINT REPRESENTS SELF ___ OR ORGANIZED GROUP ___

IF GROUP, NAME OF GROUP _____

WHAT IS YOUR CRITICISM OF THIS WORK? PLEASE CITE SPECIFIC PASSAGES, PAGES, SECTIONS, ETC. _____

HAVE YOU READ/VIEWED/LISTENED TO THE WHOLE WORK? _____

FOR WHAT AGE GROUP WOULD YOU RECOMMEND THIS WORK _____

DATE

SIGNATURE OF COMPLAINANT