

MERRIMACK PUBLIC LIBRARY
COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

- A.** The purpose of the Merrimack Public Library's collection development policy is to guide the staff in the selection of materials of all types, to fulfill the mission of the Library, and to inform the public of the policies of selection. This policy will be reviewed and revised periodically as the need arises.
- B.** The Merrimack Public Library and its Board of Trustees endorse and support the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement of the American Library Association. They subscribe to the principles put forth in the ALA Labels and Rating Systems, the ALA Resolution on the Removal of Challenged Materials, Freedom to View Statement, and Access for Children and Young Adults to Nonprint Materials. Copies of these items are in the appendix.
- C.** The ultimate responsibility for selection of library materials rests with the Library Director who operates within the framework of the policies determined by the Board of Library Trustees. This responsibility may be shared with other members of the library staff. Since the Director must be available to answer to the Library Trustees and to the general public for actual selections made, the Director has the authority to reject or select any item contrary to the recommendations of the staff.
- D. Selection of Materials**
- 1.** The main points considered in the selection of library materials are
 - a.** existing library holdings
 - b.** suitability of material to the community
 - c.** individual merit of each item
 - d.** budget
 - e.** popular appeal/demand
 - f.** space constraints
 - 2.** Materials selected may include works of a recognized author within the limits of his/her specific field regardless of his/her moral or political views; works of current or potentially historic significance regardless of political or social variance; books in fields that represent a principle or idea which has not been completely accepted or developed; certain books whose language or content might be intended for mature readers. Whenever possible both sides of a question are explored.
 - 3.** Titles which are obviously and exclusively written for pornographic or sensational purposes will not be selected; however, objectionable language and vivid descriptions of sex and violence when dealt with realistically within the context of the book will not be criteria for rejecting the book.

4. The responsibility for children's choices in reading material rests with the parents and legal guardians. Library book selection will not be determined by the possibility that controversial books may come into the possession of children.
 5. Material is judged on the basis of the work as a whole, not by a part taken out of context.
 6. Judgment in book selection will be based on current reviews and professional library and literary opinion as shown in journals, standard bibliographies, and other publications in the field. Some of these include
 - *Library Journal*
 - *Publishers Weekly*
 - *New York Times Book Review*
 - *School Library Journal*
 - *Booklist*
 - *VOYA, Voice of Youth Advocates*
 7. The lack of a review or an unfavorable review shall not be the sole reason for rejecting a title which is in demand. Consideration is, therefore, given to requests of library patrons and books discussed on public media.
 8. Due to limited budget and space, the Library cannot purchase all materials that are requested. The Library is a member of GMILCS, Inc., a consortium of libraries, who share items through a Common Borrower Program and Universal Requests. Interlibrary loan is also used to obtain materials from other libraries in New Hampshire as well as out-of-state when those materials are requested that may be beyond the scope of the Merrimack Public Library's collection.
- E. Non-print materials will be selected with the same guidelines which apply to print materials. Listed here are those areas which are specific to the various Nonprint materials.
1. Sound Recordings: Books recorded onto cassettes or CDs. The collection will include unabridged and abridged titles, in fiction and non-fiction, and will be available for all ages. Materials will be purchased based on reviews of the recording or on the books themselves and on popular demand. Sound recordings which are damaged will be replaced if the materials are still popular or have special merit, such as classic literature.
 2. Video Recordings: Video recordings in the VHS and DVD formats will be selected from reviews when possible and from books and databases that rate films. The Library will purchase instructional and education recordings. The library will also purchase feature films and television programs for all ages which are well-reviewed, award-winners, and on popular demand.
 3. Compact Discs: Music will be purchased on CD from music reviews and on

popular demand. Music will include, but not be limited to, popular, classical, jazz, folk, country, rock, and international. Seasonal music such as holiday music and patriotic music will also be considered.

4. Downloadable Audio: Sound recordings available for download from the Internet may also be purchased. Currently the only content available to the library is from the State Library Downloadable Consortium.

F. New Hampshire Collection

1. The New Hampshire collection is a non-circulating, restricted access collection that is housed in the Director's Office. The Library attempts to collect all town histories for Hillsborough County, state and local governmental information and reports, and other materials important to the study of New Hampshire and Merrimack history.

G. Maintaining the Collection

1. Weeding. A current, useful, and attractive collection is maintained through a continual discarding and replacement process. Replacement of worn volumes is dependent upon current demand, accuracy, usefulness, more recent acquisitions, and availability of newer editions.
2. Disposal of Discarded Material. If in salable condition, the material is placed in book sales. If in poor condition, the material is disposed of. Superseded reference materials not placed in the circulating collection are first offered to the Hillstown Cooperative libraries and then to the other libraries in NH before being placed in a book sale or disposed of.

H. Challenged Materials

1. Although materials are carefully selected, differences of opinion can arise regarding the suitability of certain materials. Patrons requesting that material be withdrawn from or restricted within the collection may complete a Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources form which is available from a supervisory staff member. The challenged material will remain in the collection while it is being reviewed. The request shall be reviewed by the Library Director and appropriate members of the staff. The material will be evaluated using review sources as well as close examination of the material. The Library Director will then issue a written decision to the challenger within 30 days. This decision may be appealed to the Library Board of Trustees. The challenger's appeal will be placed on the agenda of the next regular meeting of the Merrimack Public Library Trustees. Decisions of the Library Board are final and are made within 60 days of receipt of the appeal. Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources form is attached to this policy.

Changes accepted by the Trustees of the Merrimack Public Library, June 17, 2008