

# Alpha Park Public Library District Collection Development Policy



The mission of the Alpha Park Public Library District is to provide open access to information and materials and to promote literacy and lifelong learning opportunities for all members of the community.

## I. PRINCIPLES

The Alpha Park Public Library District Materials Selection Policy is based on the following principles:

- A. Materials are selected which provide for the entertainment, education, enrichment, and/or self-improvement of all library patrons, within budgetary constraints and availability of materials.
- B. A variety of materials are selected to meet the cultural, educational, informational, and recreational needs of its community, regardless of individual background, beliefs, race, or age.
- C. The freedom to read, along with the freedom to hear and to view, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. This freedom, essential to our democracy, will be upheld, supported, and defended in the selection and accessibility of all library materials. In this regard, the library upholds the principles of the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, Freedom to View, Statement on Labeling, and Free Access to Libraries for Minors. These principles are hereby incorporated into this policy as if fully set forth therein.
- D. Selection of materials does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content, viewpoint, implications, or presentation of the materials.
- E. The library staff does not serve *in loco parentis*. It is the parent(s), and only the parent(s), who may restrict their children, and only their own children, from access to library materials. Responsibility for children's reading rests with their parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s). Selection will not be inhibited by the possibility that materials may inadvertently come into the possession of children.
- F. The library is not a judicial body. Laws governing obscenity, subversive materials, and other questionable matters are subject to interpretation by the courts. Consequently, no challenged material will be removed from the library for complaints of obscenity, pornography, subversiveness, or any other category covered by law until after receipt of an independent court order. Conversely, materials previously judged unlawful will not knowingly be selected.

## II. POLICY

In accordance with the above principles, the following policies apply in regard to materials selection and accessibility for the general library collection.

### A. Selection

As budgetary constraints limit the purchase of materials, the selections made follow the aforementioned principles while attempting to maintain diversity, quality and responsiveness to patron interest patterns. As such, selections are made on the basis of any one, several, or all of the following considerations:

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1. **Diversity** is pursued by attempting to meet the needs of all ages, backgrounds, and educational levels, by providing as many subject fields as possible, and by providing alternative perspectives as well as popular materials. The collection represents various opinions and viewpoints and should broadly reflect the various ethnic and social groups in the Library District.
2. **Quality** is pursued by applying professional discretion and standards established by the library profession and through the use of appropriate selection aids, including book reviews, best seller lists, etc.
3. The Library staff responds to **community interests** by careful consideration of the following: patron requests for purchases, use patterns for existing materials, purchase trends of similar materials from retailers, and any other source of information indicating community interests. The Library collection serves, to the degree possible, the interests of a diverse community without exclusion. Responsiveness to the interest of one individual or group is not restricted on the basis of dislike or objection of another individual or group. Since a wide spectrum of opinions should be represented in public libraries, no group or individual shall be permitted to impose a partisan emphasis upon the library's collection. Each item will be judged in its entirety on its own merit.
4. Undue duplication of materials is avoided. Esoteric or very technical works, and materials available elsewhere to special interest groups, are generally excluded from the collection. Materials may also be excluded if the existing collection already covers the field.
5. Materials with formats that do not conform or lend themselves to library use are usually excluded.
6. **Gifts, unsolicited materials, memorials, special contributions and citizen suggestions** for purchases are all evaluated under the same policies, principles, and selection criteria as regularly purchased materials. Insofar as it may be practicable, librarians and/or department heads will take into account any special requests or interests when selecting or accepting memorials and other gifts designated for the library's collection.
7. A useful collection is maintained through continual evaluation. Materials no longer meeting the selection criteria may be withdrawn from the collection, and discarded by sale or other appropriate means.
8. The library will work with area libraries in cooperative collection development whenever possible.
9. **Multiple copies** of materials may be purchased in response to user demand as evidenced by number of reserves, anticipated popularity, repeated requests and monitoring of the collection.

## B. Criteria

Budget and space limitations allow the purchase of only a small percentage of the many books, audio-visual, electronic, and other materials produced every year. Librarians or department heads under the supervision of the Director are responsible for materials

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selection. Materials selections are made on the basis of any one, several, or all of the following criteria:

1. Attention of critics and/or reviewers
2. Quality of production; physical durability
3. Contents that are timely, accurate, and representative of various viewpoints.
4. Content to represent needed subject area and supplemental value to educational pursuits.
5. Significant reputation of the author, editor, producer or illustrator
6. Established reputation of publisher in the mainstream of the industry.
7. Contemporary significance, potential usefulness, local history, appeal or cultural value of the title.
8. Anticipated or existing patron demand
9. Reasonable cost with regard to budget restrictions as well as enduring value.
10. Relation to existing collection and other materials on the subject
11. Statement of challenging, original, or alternative point of view
12. Space and budget limitations
13. Availability in other formats or from other libraries
14. Contribution to the diversity and scope of the collection
15. Receipt or nomination for awards
16. Regional connections
17. Wide appeal

## **C. Additional Criteria for New or Emerging Formats**

The online collection evolves as new formats and products become available. This collection may include research and learning databases, eBooks or other downloadable and streaming media. The online collection follows the principles and criteria set forth in this policy with the additional criteria to be considered:

1. Impact on equipment, staff, storage, space
2. Demand for format in community
3. Durability of format in library use
4. Compliance with industry standards and specifications
5. Availability of adequate start up and continuing funding
6. Capability for networked distribution, download and printing or other technical considerations
7. Availability of technical support and staff training
8. Accessibility of material
9. Ease of use by patrons and staff
10. Ownership of product

## **III. Responsibility Statement**

The ultimate responsibility for selecting library materials rests with the Library Director, who operates within the framework of policies established by the Alpha Park Public Library District Board of Trustees. No disciplinary action may befall the staff whom order,

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process, or request collection materials. Department Heads and Managers are responsible for ordering collection materials as needed. Staff in the Technical Services Department assist in the continuity of collections through an organized structure for budgeting, acquiring, and managing library materials. The acquisition of any item by the Alpha Park Public Library District does not infer an endorsement or alignment of any kind with that material's political, scientific, religious, philosophical, or cultural worldview or content. Nor does the Alpha Park Public Library adhere to the intent of the patron whom requests such an item for check-out, purchase, or reconsideration.

#### IV. **Request for Consideration of Library Materials**

In trying to meet the diverse needs of this community, the library's collection necessarily represents a variety of political, religious, and social opinions. It is not unexpected that some people will be dissatisfied with what is present in, or absent from, the collection. A **Request for Reconsideration Form**, which is a part of the library's collection development policy, is available to Alpha Park Library District active card-holders for comments concerning the presence, absence, or reclassification of any materials. Upon receipt of the completed form, the Director will consult with the staff department heads, and make a decision on the matter. The Director will convey his or her decision to the complainant in writing within thirty (30) days of the decision. Anyone dissatisfied with the Director's decision may appeal the matter to the Library Board of Trustees. During the reconsideration process, library staff will not remove or discard any items under examination. Only items belonging to the Alpha Park Public Library will be allowed for review of consideration. All requests for reconsideration will be filed with the Office for Intellectual Freedom.

#### V. **Suggestions for additions to the collection**

To assure the acquisition of resources desired by Library users, patron suggestions are always considered for their addition to the collection. Suggestions may be made at any public service desk or via the library email [alpha@alphapark.org](mailto:alpha@alphapark.org).

#### VI. **Gifts for the Collection**

The Alpha Park Public Library accepts gifts of new or gently used books, audiobooks, or DVDs. Decisions on whether and how donated items will be added to the Library's collection are based on the same evaluative criteria that are applied to purchased materials. The Library does not return gifted items. Items that are not added to the collections are given to the Friends of the Alpha Park Library.

#### VII. **Collection Maintenance**

In addition to acquiring new materials, it is equally important to remove from the existing collection those items no longer deemed useful or relevant. Collection maintenance provides authority and guidance for the systematic and regular evaluation of the existing collection and subsequent withdrawal of worn, obsolete, or infrequently used materials and supports the public's right of access to an appealing and relevant collection. This removal is known as "Weeding" or "Withdrawing" from a collection.

Replacement copies of items meeting the criteria for withdrawal may be considered based on the criteria in the collection development policy above.

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Materials that no longer meet the aforementioned criteria in the library's collection development policy will be withdrawn from the system. The library reserves the right to determine how materials are removed.

Weeding Evaluation Criteria:

1. Misleading and/or factually inaccurate
2. Ugly (worn out beyond mending)
3. Superseded by a new edition or a better source
4. Trivial (of no discernible literary or scientific merit)
5. Irrelevant to the needs and/or interests of the community
6. Elsewhere: material may be easily borrowed from another source
7. Duplicate copies no longer needed
8. Existence of adequate coverage of the subject in the collection
9. Infrequently used item/low circulation stats over multiple years