

## **MATERIAL SELECTION & RECONSIDERATION POLICY**

### **A. PURPOSE**

The Westwood Free Public Library serves as a major resource for providing information, education, guidance, enjoyment and cultural interests of the citizens of the community. It has the responsibility to insure that the collections of print and non-print materials are responsive to the expressed public needs and demands and adjusts to change in order to retain a relevant role in society.

### **B. RESPONSIBILITY AND CRITERIA**

All responsibility for a well-rounded collection rests with the Library Director and the professional staff. Materials chosen shall meet principles set by the First Amendment to the U. S. Constitution; the Library Bill of Rights, adopted by the American Library Association; the Freedom to Read Statement, adopted by the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council; and the People's Right to Libraries Statement, adopted by the New Jersey Library Association.

The selection of materials is targeted to meeting the needs and interests of the community. The Library's main function is to provide books and materials for all ages and reading levels and is able to draw on the resources of the Bergen County Cooperative Library System.

Professional staff will use recognized collection tools such as Library Journal, Booklist, New York Times Book Review, School Library Journal, and Kirkus for purchasing new materials. Good judgment is the keystone for the ultimate addition of any new purchase.

Textbooks are not and will not be a part of usual purchases.

Requests for purchases of current materials may be made at the Library or online. Requests will be considered using professional selection standards.

Censorship is a matter of individual decisions. Every patron has the right to accept or reject material for personal use and does not have the right to restrict it for others. In the case of children, appropriate choices are solely the responsibility of the parents. Librarians cannot assume the private relationship role between parent and child.

### **C. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION**

Outdated, worn, damaged or lost materials will be assessed by appropriate staff members. Replacement will be determined by availability of current or updated content.

### **D. CONTROVERSIAL MATERIALS**

The Westwood Free Public Library has the responsibility to provide its patrons with diverse sources of information and the widest possible range of ideas and viewpoints. Therefore, it attempts to provide materials of interest to all members of the community regardless of age, religion, national origin, social views, educational level, political view or cultural background. However, the Library recognizes that some materials acquired may be controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons and/or organizations because of perceived profanity, social, economic and political ideas, religious viewpoints, the background of the author, the kinds of information provided, or other reasons.

Acquisitions or use of any material does not imply approval or endorsement of the contents. Rather, it is a means of collection development to meet patron's needs and does not necessarily reflect the opinion or values of the individual selector or of the Library Board of Trustees. Works are normally not excluded because of language, explicit text, or illustrations if they meet previously stated criteria.

Responsibility for the reading materials of juveniles rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection of adult materials will not be limited by the possibility that personally unacceptable books may come into the possession of young people.

As expressed in the Freedom to Read statement, the Library supports the belief “that ideas can be dangerous; but, that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.”

Persons or organizations seeking the removal of materials must fill out a Reconsideration Request Form and discuss the matter with the Director. The Director will meet with the staff member responsible for selecting the item in question and the merit of the request will be considered. The Director will determine the retention or withdrawal of challenged materials. Requests for appeal must be made in writing to the President of the Board of Trustees. Final determination will be made by the full Board of Trustees.

*Under Review*