
COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

INTRODUCTION

This policy is intended to serve as a guide for library staff in building and maintaining a collection to meet the needs of the residents of the Westfield Washington Public Library (“Library”) service area. Collection development includes the selection, acquisition, and removal of all print, nonprint and electronic resources.

MISSION & VISION STATEMENT

The Westfield Washington Public Library’s mission is to foster exploration, discovery and growth. The vision is to be the cornerstone of lifelong learning in Westfield and Washington Township.

RESPONSIBILITY

Collection development is entrusted to the Director of the Library as directed by current policies that have been adopted by the Library Board of Trustees (“Library Board”). The delegation of responsibilities for selection in specific subject areas and formats regarding the evaluation, acquisition, retention and withdrawal of materials rests with the Library Director.

SCOPE

The scope of the collection is intended to meet the cultural, educational, informational and recreational needs of all residents of Library service area by offering a choice of level of difficulty, format and treatment within current budget guidelines and constraints. In October of 2009 the library became a member of Evergreen Indiana, a statewide library consortium. Member libraries share a combined online catalog, allowing their patrons access to hundreds of thousands of library materials owned by other member libraries. Most of these items may be placed on hold and borrowed via an inter-library courier service. In order to better serve the needs of its residents, the Library staff will encourage the use of Interlibrary Loan for those items that are not available from another Evergreen Indiana member library and are infrequently requested. The emphasis is on acquiring materials of wide-ranging interest and varying complexity for the general public. The collection is reviewed and revised on an on-going basis to meet the evolving needs of this community.

SELECTION CRITERIA & TOOLS

Library staff exercises judgment, experience, and professional expertise in the application of the following criteria for materials selection. The Library’s existing collection, the interests and needs of the community, the individual merit of each item, the Library’s budget and its services are the primary factors considered when selecting materials. Being a member of the Evergreen Indiana Library Consortium in no way removes the Library’s responsibility to purchase library materials for its service area’s taxpayers and the Library will continue to make purchases

suitable for its local users based on the following factors. Each title is judged as a whole; isolated passages in and of themselves are not used as selection/deselection criteria. As far as possible, the Library will provide materials providing various viewpoints about controversial issues that illustrate careful study, give evidence of a sincere desire to be factual, and are written in a fair manner. Acquisition of self-published works and works by local authors are subject to the same selection criteria as any other item.

Librarians use a variety of tools to aid in the selection of materials including, but not limited to the following criteria (not ranked in any particular order):

- A. Popular demand and requests
- B. Favorable reviews from professional library resources
- C. Accuracy of information
- D. Budget
- E. Individual merit of each item
- F. Availability of material
- G. Relationship to existing materials in collection
- H. Balance of diverse points of view
- I. Core collection enhancement

WEEDING, DISCARDING & REPLACEMENT OF MATERIALS

In order to maintain a vital collection which meets the needs of our community, the examination of materials is an ongoing process. Weeding will be done with the same care and thought as selection. An item may be considered for discard when it is: obsolete or contains inaccurate information, is worn in appearance, is damaged beyond repair, no longer circulates, or is a multiple copy. Withdrawn materials may be donated to the Friends of the Westfield Library. Materials chosen for withdrawal may be replaced if they are still in print and are of continuing value to the collection.

FORMAT

Formats include print, audiovisual, non-print, multimedia materials and downloadable materials. Library staff monitor the development of new formats and, within budgetary and technical limitations, add these to the collection. Choice of new formats will be based on customer demand, community trends, new product development and positive critical reviews.

INTERLIBRARY LOAN

The Library cannot purchase all materials. Interlibrary loan is used for items that are not available through Evergreen Indiana, and will not be purchased due to limited budget, space, availability or being beyond the scope of the library's collection.

DONATIONS

The library accepts gifts of materials but reserves the right to evaluate and dispose of them in accordance with the criteria applied to purchased materials. The library retains the authority to accept or reject gifts and to make all decisions as to their use, housing and final disposition.



Materials not added to the collection may be donated to the Friends of the Westfield Library, with all profits benefiting the Library. A receipt for tax purposes is available upon request. By law, library staff are not allowed to assess a “fair market” value to the donation. Donations not accepted include but are not limited to: magazines, damaged items, outdated technical or medical books, or items which are damp or smell of mold or mildew. Donations that have been deemed appropriate for the collection will be cataloged and available to the public within 60 days of receipt.

GIFTS

Memorial gifts of materials or money are gladly accepted with suitable recognition placed in the item if requested. Specific memorial books can be ordered by request if the request meets the established selection criteria. The Library encourages and appreciates gifts.

CHALLENGED MATERIALS

The Library staff recognizes that some materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons. Selection of materials will not be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the basis of the principles stated in this policy.

Patrons requesting that material be withdrawn from or restricted within the collection should first be given a “Statement of Concern About Library Resources” form to fill out. This will then be forwarded to the appropriate department manager. Upon request the department manager will contact the patron. The form is then given to the Library Director. If the patron is still unsatisfied the Library Director may take the request before the Library Board.

ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

The criteria and tools used to select printed materials also apply to the selection of electronic resources that include, but are not limited to, online services, online commercial databases and resources on the Internet. A link from the Library’s website to a third-party website does not imply endorsement of the contents of that site or of a particular point of view.