

Materials Selection Policy
Commerce Township Community Library
Approved 9/13/2005

The Commerce Township Community Library Materials Selection Policy exists to serve as a guide in the selection of materials and to inform the public about the principles upon which selections are made.

Principles of Selection

The objective of the Commerce Township Community Library is to collect, organize, and make easily available to the people of the community materials which will help them in the pursuit of education, information and the creative use of leisure time. Within the limits of space and budget, the collection offers patrons materials in a choice of format, treatment, and level of difficulty. In this way most individual library needs can be met and service provided to individuals of all ages.

Within the community of Commerce Township there are groups and individuals with diverse interests, backgrounds and needs. The Library collection reflects, as closely as possible, the interests of the majority while not neglecting the equally important interests and views of minorities within the local, national and international communities. The Library's role is to provide materials which will allow individuals to access information to make their own decisions.

It should be recognized that some materials chosen may be offensive, shocking or boring to some individuals, but may be meaningful and significant to others. It is the responsibility of individuals to limit their library use to books and materials which are consistent with their individual tastes. While everyone is free to reject for themselves and their children materials of which they do not approve, they may not restrict the freedom of others to read or inquire.

The inclusion of an item in the collection is not to be considered an endorsement, official or otherwise, by the Library. The Library neither approves nor disapproves the views expressed in materials included in the collection. The Library cannot exclude all materials that could conceivably result in mental or physical injury to some individual, since theoretically any material could be harmful to someone if improperly used.

Materials in the collection are arranged in a way to facilitate access to information. No restriction is placed on their use except for the purposes of protecting them from theft or damage.

Selection Criteria

Ultimate responsibility for materials selection rests with the Library Director who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Library Board. The day-to-

day work of selection and evaluation is the responsibility of the staff of professional librarians.

The selection of materials is characterized by open-mindedness and responsiveness to the changing needs of the citizens of Commerce Township. Materials are evaluated as complete works and not on the basis of a particular passage or passages.

All acquisitions, whether purchased or donated, are evaluated by the following standards. An item need not meet all of the criteria to be acceptable, nor will any single criterion be decisive.

- Public demand
- Quality of content, including accuracy, timeliness, literary or artistic merit
- Quality and suitability of the format
- Social significance
- Reputation of author and/or publisher
- Inclusion in list/s of recommended titles, standard bibliographies, and/or award winners
- Importance of subject matter to the collection
- Scarcity of material on the subject and availability elsewhere
- Price

The Library does not buy pornography or materials which trade exclusively in sensationalism.

Suggestions from patrons are encouraged and will be given due consideration.

In selecting library materials for children, the Library's objective is to provide a collection that meets the informational, recreational, and cultural needs of children from preschool age through sixth grade. However, resources of the entire Library are accessible to them as the need arises. Selection of adult material will not be restricted by the possibility that these materials may come into the possession of minors.

The collection contains materials which express a wide variety of views and are suitable for all ages and abilities. It is, therefore, the responsibility of parents or legal guardians to guide the reading, viewing, and listening choices of their children and young adults, and to decide what their children may or may not use from this collection.

In providing materials for student use the Library cannot provide multiple copies of individual books or textbooks for school assignments, nor can it duplicate subject materials extensively.

Collection Maintenance

In order to maintain a vital, current collection which meets the needs of the community, examination of materials is an ongoing process. When library books lose the value for

which they were originally selected, they should be withdrawn. An item is considered for discard when it is:

- Obsolete, misleading or outdated
- Worn beyond use
- Damaged
- No longer circulating and/or used for reference purposes
- One of many copies of a formerly popular title.

Space availability and low circulation over a period of time are other factors that may influence the withdrawal decision.

Withdrawn materials are not automatically replaced. Replacement is considered in relation to adequate coverage in a specific subject area, availability of more current or better titles, suitability according to this selection policy and demand for the title.

Gifts, including memorial items, are subject to these withdrawal and replacement policies.

Discarded library materials may not be reserved for specific individuals. They may be offered for sale, on a first-come, first-served basis, at the library. Donations of discarded materials may also be made, at the discretion of the Director, to neighboring libraries, educational institutions or charitable organizations.

Gifts

The Library accepts gifts of materials with the understanding that the Library may make whatever use of the material it feels appropriate. No restrictions on the Library's use of gift materials may be made by the donor.

Gifts become the Library's property upon receipt; they may not be reclaimed. Materials not needed in the collection will be placed in the Library's book sale; donated to other libraries, educational institutions or charitable organizations; or discarded. Donated materials added to the collection are subject to the same withdrawal and replacement criteria as materials purchased by the Library.

It is the policy of the Library not to accept special collections of gift materials if the condition of acceptance requires that they be kept together as a separate physical entity. Further the Library shall not accept as a gift any printed or manuscript items or any objects if the condition of acceptance requires permanent exhibition of the item or object.

Upon request a note of receipt will be issued for donated items. However, it is the donor's responsibility to determine the fair market value of the donated materials.

Reconsideration of Library Materials

Any library patron who is a resident of Commerce Township may question the presence of an item in the Library's collection. If the patron concludes that a specific item does not meet the guidelines of the Materials Selection Policy, he or she may complete a "Request for Reconsideration of Library Material" form. The completed form will be reviewed by the professional staff including the Library Director, and the patron will be informed of the disposition of the request.

Patrons not satisfied with this disposition may then appeal to the Library Advisory Board through the Library Director, who will forward the request to the Board along with staff recommendations. After reading the item in question and full consideration of the specific material, the Library Advisory Board shall make determination of the matter. The patron shall be notified of this action in a timely manner. If the patron is still unsatisfied with the disposition of the matter, the patron may appeal it to the Commerce Township Board for final determination.

If a patron wishes to request a change to the Materials Selection policy, he or she should put this request in writing addressed to the Library Director. The Director will respond in kind with a decision and an explanation of action taken or not taken regarding the request. If the patron is not satisfied, he or she may appeal to the Library Advisory Board who will also respond to the patron with its decision. This may be appealed to the Commerce Township Board whose decision on the matter is final.

This policy, as well as any Library policy will be made available on the Library's website, or in print format upon request.