



# Western Sullivan Public Library

## MATERIALS SELECTION/ COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

### A. Objectives

The purpose of the Western Sullivan Public Library is to provide all individuals in the community with carefully selected books and other materials to aid the individual in the pursuit of education, information, research, pleasure, and the creative use of leisure time.

Because of the volume of publishing, as well as the limitations of budget and space, the library must have a selection policy with which to meet community interests and needs.

The materials selection/collection development policy is used by the library staff in the selection of materials and also serves to acquaint the general public with the principles of selection.

The *Library Bill of Rights* and *The Freedom to Read Statement* have been endorsed by the Western Sullivan Public Library Board of Trustees and are integral parts of the policy.

### B. Responsibility for Selection

The ultimate responsibility for selection of library materials rests with the Library Director who operates within the framework of the policies determined by the Western Sullivan Public Library Board of Trustees. This responsibility may be shared with other members of the library staff; however, because the Director must be available to answer to the Library Board and 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.

### C. Criteria for Selection

1. The main points considered in the selection of materials are:

- a) individual merit of each item
- b) popular appeal/demand
- c) suitability of material for the clientele
- d) existing library holdings
- e) budget

2. Reviews are a major source of information about new materials. The primary sources of reviews are *Booklist* and *Library Journal*.



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3. 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 from library patrons and books discussed on public media. Materials are judged on the basis of the work as a whole, not on a part taken out of context.

### **D. Interlibrary Loan**

Because of limited budget and space, the library cannot provide all materials that are requested. Therefore, interlibrary loan is used to obtain from other libraries those materials that are beyond the scope of this library's collection.

In return for utilizing interlibrary loan to satisfy the needs of our patrons, the Western Sullivan Public Library agrees to lend its materials to other libraries using a standard interlibrary loan policy.

- New titles to the library do not circulate via ILL.
- New films, with the exception of instructional/non-fiction, do not circulate via ILL.
- Any patron utilizing ILL agrees to the user policies of the lending institution.

### **E. Gifts and Donations**

The library accepts gifts of books and other materials with the understanding that they will be added to the collection only if appropriate and needed. If they are not needed because of duplication, condition, or dated information the Director can dispose of them as he/she sees fit. The same criteria of selection which are applied to purchased materials are applied to gifts. Memorial gifts of books or money are also accepted. Specific memorial books can be ordered for the library on request of a patron if the request meets the criteria established by the Board. It is desirable for gifts of or for specific titles to be offered after consultation with the Library Director or Branch Manager. Book selection will be made by the Director if no specific book is requested. The Western Sullivan Public Library encourages and appreciates gifts and donations.

The library does not accept encyclopedias, magazines, reader digest edition books, and books that are in poor condition, damaged, or moldy.

By law, the library is not allowed to appraise the value of donated materials, though it can provide an acknowledgment of receipt of the items if requested by the donor.



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## **F. Weeding**

The collection development process includes continual weeding of items in the library collection that are outdated, rarely used, no longer of interest or value to the public, unnecessarily duplicated, worn out or damaged. The guidelines listed above are generalizations and there will be exceptions. Replacement of materials will be up to the discretion of the Director and his/her designated staff. Weeding materials allows the library to maintain an up-to-date, accurate and useful collection; improves appearance and browsability of the collection; and allows for easier evaluation of the collection. Items removed from the collection may be sold, given away, recycled, discarded, or otherwise disposed of at the discretion of the Library Director.

This ongoing process of weeding is the responsibility of the Library Director and is authorized by the Board of Trustees.

## **G. Potential Problems or Challenges**

The Western Sullivan Public Library 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.

Responsibility for the reading of children rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection of library materials will not be inhibited by the possibility that materials may come into the possession of children.

Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of their contents, and no library material will be sequestered except to protect it from damage or theft.

## **H. Challenged Materials**

Although materials are carefully selected, there can arise differences of opinion regarding suitable materials. Patrons requesting that material be withdrawn from or restricted within the collection may complete a "Statement of Concern About Library Resources" form and submit it to the Director. The inquiry will be placed on the agenda of the next regular meeting of the Western Sullivan Public Library Board of Trustees.