



BEDFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY MATERIAL SELECTION POLICY

MISSION STATEMENT

A critical element within the mission of the Bedford Public Library is: to provide access to informational, educational, cultural and recreational library materials and services in a variety of formats and technologies; to be responsive to the public library needs of the community; and to uphold the public's freedom of access to information. The library's mission also includes developing and maintaining the library as the cultural and meeting center of Bedford.

In accordance with this mission, the Bedford Public Library subscribes to the Library Bill of Rights, Access to Digital Resources and Services (an interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights), Freedom to Read Statement and other policies on intellectual freedom authored by the American Library Association (ALA), and available in the most recent edition of the Intellectual Freedom Manual, published by the American Library Association.

GOALS OF SERVICE

The Bedford Public Library's objectives are:

1. To provide materials that will enrich and support the community, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities, and maturity levels of the citizens.
2. To provide materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values and ethical standards.
3. To provide recreational materials that will bring enjoyment and entertainment.
4. To provide a background of information which will enable patrons to make intelligent judgments in their daily life.
5. To provide materials on opposing sides of controversial issues so that citizens may develop the practice of critical reading and thinking.
6. To provide materials representative of the many religious, ethnic, and cultural groups and their contributions to our American heritage.

7. To place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of materials of the highest quality in order to assure a comprehensive collection appropriate for the users of the library.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR MATERIALS SELECTION

The responsibility for collection development coordination and supervision lies with the Library Director, who is accountable for the growth and maintenance of the collection. The Library will apply established professional standards in the selection and retention of its materials. Selected staff members have collection development responsibilities for specific collections, subject areas, or formats. All staff members make suggestions for new and replacement materials.

SELECTION TOOLS

The following journals are the standard first source to assist in the selection process: Library Journal, School Library Journal, Horn Book, Booklist, Kirkus Review, New York Times Book Review, and Publisher's Weekly. Other standard selection tools such as the Public Library Core Collection: Nonfiction, Fiction Core Collection, and Children's Catalog are also consulted. Other review sources of a specialized nature, including popular media, are used for specific collections. Bestseller lists including the New York Times Bestseller List, Boston Globe Local Bestsellers List, and Publisher's Weekly Bestsellers Lists may also be consulted.

FACTORS INFLUENCING SELECTION

The following factors will be taken into consideration when selecting materials:

1. Needs of the community
2. Size of the budget
3. Desire to develop a diverse collection
4. Physical quality and durability of the material

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Materials are judged by standards appropriate to their purpose and nature. Not all guides and criteria are applicable to every item and they vary in importance. The following evaluation criteria are used as they apply to all formats, including audio-visual and digital materials, equipment, and other non-book items:

1. The materials meet high standards of quality in factual content and presentation and are appropriate to the ability and needs of the patrons.
2. The materials are selected because of the content and value of the work as a whole.
3. The materials contribute to literary appreciation or have aesthetic value.
4. The authors are competent and qualified in their field.
5. The publishers are reputable.
6. The materials are objectively and impartially selected to provide a diverse collection that reflects major viewpoints in a field.
7. The materials exemplify the most current information that is necessary on a topic.
8. It is not in the best interest of the library that we acquire textbooks or condensed books.
9. For non-book materials: ease of access, the format's compatibility with widely available hardware, and the item's durability should also be considered.

POLICIES BY FORMAT

- Books – The library will buy high quality hardcover, paperback, and board print books whenever possible.
- Large print books – The library will continue to provide a well-rounded collection of large print books for visually impaired readers.
- Periodicals – The library will provide a well-rounded collection of news magazines and magazines of special interest, endeavoring to buy ones that are indexed in reputable and available sources, keeping in mind that many magazines or articles are full-text in our periodical databases.
- Newspapers – The library will provide the print version of local and national newspapers on a daily and weekly basis as well as electronic access to many newspapers, endeavoring to purchase national newspapers that are indexed in reputable and available sources and local newspapers.
- Audio Material – The library will purchase audiobooks in a variety of formats in the unabridged version whenever possible. The library will also purchase music of interest to the community.
- Films – The library will buy films of good quality, focusing on those which most enhance our collection and meet the recreational and educational needs of the community.
- Databases – The library will provide databases that will enhance the collection. These electronic resources will be well reviewed, user friendly, and kept current. They may also provide information not available through another format.

- Microform – The library will purchase selected local newspapers on microfilm/fiche.
- Ebooks and downloadable audiobooks – The library participates in the New Hampshire State Library’s Downloadable Books Consortium and the GMILCS Digital Library Group to provide access to ebooks and downloadable audiobooks. Selection of those materials is governed by the Consortium’s and GMILCS collection development policies. The library director may supplement this collection, using the evaluation criteria in this policy.

SELF-PUBLISHED MATERIALS

Self-published materials will be considered when they are written by a local author and there is substantial community interest in the work or if the topic is of local significance. This policy’s evaluation criteria will also apply.

PURCHASE SUGGESTIONS FROM PATRONS

Bedford Public Library cardholders who would like to suggest that the Library purchase an item may submit a Purchase Request Form in person or submit a request via phone, mail, or email. Requests should include the title, author, publishing information, reviews of the resource (as available), and how the patron heard about the item. The librarians will use the evaluation criteria when determining whether to purchase the item. Generally, they will first attempt to borrow the item for the patron via interlibrary loan.

GIFTS

The Library welcomes the gifts of materials, but reserves the right to evaluate them in accordance with the criteria applied to purchased materials. Gifts which do not meet the objectives of this policy may be refused. Bookplates may be provided for gifts, and a form for tax purposes may be provided to the donor. No other conditions may be imposed relating to any gift either before or after its acceptance by the Library. The library cannot accept gifts of textbooks, Reader’s Digest Condensed books, or encyclopedia sets. Gifts are accepted provided:

1. The gift meets the same standards of selection as those applied to original purchases.
2. The gifts can be integrated into the general library collection and do not need special housing.
3. The library staff may dispose of the gift, at its discretion, if it does not fit the collection needs, is out-of-date, or is in poor physical condition not warranting the cost of repair.

4. The donor arranges for an outside source to evaluate the gift for tax purposes, if such an evaluation is needed.

MAINTENANCE/DESELECTION

The Library Director and/or librarians have the responsibility of discarding (weeding) and disposing of library materials. As part of the ongoing selection process, the librarian will periodically evaluate the collection in terms of its usefulness. Lack of demand, obsolete or erroneous information, or poor physical condition are the main reasons for eliminating an item from the collection. These materials will be marked discarded. Discarded materials of possible use to others will be offered to charitable, historical, educational or public institutions, sold, or discarded at an appropriate transfer station, at the discretion of the librarian.

The following criteria are used to determine which materials are subject to withdrawal from the collection:

- Out of date or incorrect information
- Badly worn or damaged physical condition
- Insufficient use:
 - Works no longer of popular interest (e.g., older fiction)
 - Multiple copies of previously popular works
 - Topic no longer relevant
- Lack of physical space
- More current treatment in collection

Even though meeting the above criteria, certain materials may not be discarded because of their unique nature.

RESOURCE RECONSIDERATION PROCESS

The Bedford Public Library selects materials based on the criteria specified within this policy. The Library does not advocate particular views or beliefs but attempts to provide free access to a well-balanced collection of topics, appropriate for different age levels and opinions to all members of the community. Each individual has the freedom and responsibility for making choices about what to read. No labels will be assigned to materials beyond those indicating genre.

Patrons who wish to request the withdrawal or reclassification of material currently owned by the library are encouraged to discuss their concerns with the library director. If the patron is not satisfied with the response to their request, the director will provide the patron with information and a form to request formal reconsideration of the library resource. When the director receives the completed form, they will evaluate the resource using the criteria outlined in this Material Selection Policy. During the reconsideration process, the material will remain in place and may not be removed. The director will provide a written response to the patron making the request. If the patron does not agree with the Library Director's decision, they may appeal the decision to the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees' decision will be final.

Adopted by the Bedford Public Library Board of Trustees 03/29/2002

Revised 12/09/2021



PATRON REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF MATERIAL

The Bedford Public Library Board of Trustees has established a material selection policy and a procedure for gathering input about particular items. Completion of this form is the first step in that procedure. If you wish to request reconsideration of a resource, please return the completed form to the library director.

Bedford Public Library. 3 Meetinghouse Road. Bedford, NH 03110

Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Do you represent self? ____ Or an organization? ____

Name of organization _____

1. Resource on which you are commenting:

____ Book ____ Magazine ____ Digital Resource ____ Newspaper
____ Movie ____ Audio Recording ____ Game ____ Other

Title _____

Author/Producer _____

2. What brought this resource to your attention?

3. Have you read the Library's Materials Selection Policy, The Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement?

4. Have you examined the entire resource? If not, what sections did you review?

5. What concerns you about the resource? Please be specific and cite pages or sections.

6. What is positive about this resource?

7. For what age group would you recommend this resource?

8. Are there resource(s) you suggest to provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic?

9. What do you believe is the theme or purpose of this work?

10. Are you aware of critical judgment of this resource? If yes, please summarize such judgments.

11. What action are you requesting the library director consider?

Signature _____

Date _____