

German-Masontown Public Library Collection Policy

Statement of Purpose

To define library collection procedures in order to maintain the highest quality collection of materials, both print and digital, for the community.

Introduction

This policy provides guidelines for staff when selecting, deselecting, and cataloging printed, recorded, and electronic resources for the library collection.

Intellectual Freedom

The German-Masontown Public Library supports the principles of intellectual freedom adopted by the American Library Association and stated in the Library Bill of Rights. The library assures equal access to all library resources by patrons within the constraints of Pennsylvania Law. Patrons are free to select or reject for themselves any item in the collection. Individual or group prejudice about a particular item or type of material in the collection may not preclude its use by others. Parents or legal guardians have the right and the responsibility to restrict the access of their children to library resources. Parents or legal guardians who do not want their children to have access to certain library services, materials, or facilities should so advise their children. Librarians cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child.

Cataloging Library Materials

German-Masontown Public Library is committed to adding only high-quality bibliographic records to the WAGGIN ILS database, for collective use by the member libraries. Library catalogers function as copy catalogers, but are committed to accuracy and completeness, to ultimately result in a correct full-level record. Updates and changes to completed bibliographic records in the WAGGIN database can only be done by communication with the WAGGIN Consortium Cataloger at Citizens Library.

Challenged Materials Policy

The library believes in freedom of information for all and does not practice censorship. The selection of library materials is predicated on the patrons' right to read and similarly, their freedom from censorship by others.

Parents or legal guardians are responsible for their child's reading, listening, and viewing of library material, including the Internet. Responsibility for materials selected and read by children and adolescents rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection decisions are not influenced by the possibility that materials may be accessible to minors.

Materials are not labeled to show approval or disapproval or to indicate certain philosophies. No library materials will be sequestered except to protect them from damage or theft.

The library recognizes that the collection of diverse materials may result in some complaints or requests for reconsideration. A patron who wishes to file a reconsideration request should submit a Request for Reconsideration Form to the Library Director. This form can be obtained at the circulation desk. The Library Director will review the request with the appropriate professional library staff, and the patron will be informed of the decision in writing, as well as what action was taken. If the patron would like to

appeal the decision, the Library Director will add the appeal to the agenda of the next regular meeting of the Library Board. The Board will review the request for reconsideration and decide the appeal. The decision of the Library Board is final.

The library is not a judicial body. Laws governing obscenity, subversive materials, and other questionable matters are subject to interpretation by the courts. Consequently, no challenged material will be removed from the library for complaints of obscenity, pornography, subversiveness, or any other category covered by law until after receipt of an independent court order. Conversely, materials judged unlawful will not knowingly be selected.

Material Selection

German-Masontown Public Library strives to provide a varied and up-to-date collection to supplement and enrich individual learning, recreational reading, and other leisure time activities. All acquisitions, whether purchased or donated, are evaluated by the standards listed below. An item need not meet ALL these criteria in order to be included in the library's collection. Materials are selected to meet patron needs and reflect a variety of viewpoints and opinions. Criteria for consideration include popular demand, literary merit, enduring value, accuracy, authoritativeness, local interest, social significance, importance of the subject matter to the collection, timeliness, cost, information available on the subject, quality, and suitability of format. The library welcomes recommendations for additions to the collection from the public but cannot guarantee the purchase of suggested materials.

Selection is not made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval of individuals, but solely on the merits of the selected work in relation to building the collection to serve the interests of all our users. No one publisher is relied upon exclusively. The staff makes skilled use of the following review sources, including but not limited to:

- Professional journals-Hornbook, Library Journal, Booklist, Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books
- Trade journals
- Subject bibliographies
- Publishers' catalogues
- Reviews from reputable sources, i.e. *N.Y. Times*, *U.S.A. Today*, etc.
- Media and online sources
- Award list, i.e. Mark Twain, Newbery

Because it is desirable to have maximum participation of the library staff in the selection of library materials, the director may delegate responsibility for selection to other staff members who are qualified by reason of experience, training, and knowledge of the community. At least one person in addition to the Director will be involved in the selection of materials. Such delegation does not relieve the Director of responsibility, but rather places the initial selection as close as possible to the point of contact with the public. This procedure is to ensure that careful consideration of the subject matter and the decision about the need to add it to the collection is not incumbent upon one individual, but subject to more than one opinion. The materials selected must not reflect the tastes views or interests of the Director and/or selectors.

No materials are to be excluded because of the race, nationality, sexual orientation, gender, political, or religious views of the writer. If a difference of opinion results in the inability to make a decision about

materials to be purchased, the Library Board Book Selection Committee (a committee of 3 board members to be appointed by the president) will be called upon to make the final decision.

Collection Maintenance

Library staff routinely evaluates the collection and removes materials in accordance with the CREW Weeding Manual. These materials include those that are worn out, out of date, no longer needed in the quantity originally purchased, no longer circulating, or in formats that have become obsolete.

Reference & Research

Patrons' questions will receive courteous, prompt, and high-quality service responses with complete confidentiality. In the instances of questions pertaining to legal, medical, financial, or tax reference, the staff may only guide the patron to the resources available on the topic of interest, and not evaluate or interpret the information provided.

Donation of Materials

The GMPL welcomes and is grateful for gifts and donations of books and other materials; its collection has been enriched by contributions from individuals. Gifts and donations are accepted with the understanding that the library reserves the privilege of deciding whether the materials should be added to their collection, with no conditions governing their use, location, or disposal. The same criteria are applied to gifts as are applied to purchased items in determining their suitability for the collection. No special collection can be set up, no restrictions are permitted as to whether an item may circulate, and no directions as to the future use of it are acceptable. Gifts and donations which are not added to the collection will be disposed of according to the weeding policy.

Donations of materials will only be accepted with the understanding that once a donation is accepted, it becomes the property of the library and its disposal is at the library's discretion.

Donations of encyclopedias, textbooks, medical and law books, magazines, and Readers Digest condensed books are discouraged.

The library cannot do appraisals but will provide an acknowledgement of donation form if requested. The library cannot assign a value to in-kind donations of goods or services.

American Library Association Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019.

Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.