



3612 Kutztown Rd
Reading PA 19605

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of the Muhlenberg Community Library Collection Development Policy is to provide guidelines for day-to-day acquisition and withdrawal decisions, resource allocation and long-range planning of collection needs in order to provide an outstanding, well-balanced collection of the best and most useful materials available to meet the needs of the community within the limits imposed by funds and space. A comprehensive range of interests, tastes, viewpoints, values, levels of ability and formats will be represented.

Goals of the Policy

- To provide full and impartial access to library services and materials for all persons regardless of need, age, sex, ethnic origin, or religion
- To assemble, preserve, and administer a varied collection of books and other related materials
- To seek to identify and respond to community needs for library materials and services
- To encourage continuing education by promoting the use of all available library resources
- To ensure continued cooperation with other libraries
- To ensure continued cooperation with public and private schools
- To support the "Library Bill of Rights" and "Freedom to Read" statement

Community To Be Served

The service area of Muhlenberg Community Library includes Muhlenberg Township, Laureldale and Alsace Township with a population of 23,753. This rapidly growing community is a mix of small town, suburban and rural residents and includes the Muhlenberg School District, the Oley School District and Holy Guardian Angels School. Although the assigned service area is limited to Muhlenberg Township, Laureldale and Alsace Township, the library serves all of Berks County through the Berks County Public Library System and the district center with access to statewide resources through AccessPA.

Description of the Collection

The Muhlenberg Community Library collection consists of more than 27,000 cataloged books, audiocassettes, compact discs, DVDs, and videotapes. The library subscribes to more than 70 periodicals. The library also houses a local history collection and the collection of the Autism Society of Berks County.

Selection Responsibility

Selection of library materials is the responsibility of the Director of the Muhlenberg Community Library who may authorize qualified staff to assist. The library's collection development policy provides guidelines and direction to the Library Director and staff as they select materials. The Director has full authority to use her or his judgment in interpreting this Collection Development Policy. The acquisition of materials must not be dismissed or the selection governed by any personal bias or prejudice especially with regard to race, national origin or religious views associated with the material.

Criteria for Selection

Meeting the needs and interests of our population is the key criteria for material selection. The purchase of multiple copies or different format of materials may be considered to meet a high demand. Inter-library loan services will be used to provide materials that do not meet criteria for inclusion in the collection.

Materials shall be selected that provide for the educational, informational and recreational needs of our patrons. The library attempts to serve patrons of all ages through its collection. Divisions



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of the collection include, but are not limited to: board books, picture books, early readers, juvenile fiction, juvenile non-fiction, juvenile videos, juvenile read-alongs, juvenile books on tape, juvenile large print books, juvenile music, juvenile periodicals, young adult fiction, young adult non-fiction, young adult books on tape, young adult periodicals, adult fiction, adult non-fiction, adult large print books, adult books on tape, adult books on CD, adult music, adult video (VHS and DVD), adult periodicals and reference.

The Muhlenberg Community Library recognizes the need to provide materials and programs to support school curricula. Textbooks used in local schools will generally not be purchased for the collection, however books that are textbooks may be included if they meet other needs of library patrons.

General Selection Tools

A variety of selection tools will be used as collection development aids. These tools include, but are not limited to:

- best seller lists
- reviews in professional library journals
- coverage in local bookstores and newspapers
- publishers' catalogs/databases
- standard bibliographies
- recommendations of professionals and library patrons

Using the selection tools, titles will be evaluated according to the following criteria

- demand
- appropriateness to the interests and skills of the intended audience
- currency of information
- comprehensiveness
- permanent significance
- artistic excellence
- value/quality
- format
- relevance to collection (duplication)
- local interest
- cost

Gifts

The director may accept or reject a donation or gift based on this collection development policy. Old textbooks, Readers' Digest Condensed Books, old magazines, books of poor quality or in poor condition and materials that do not adhere to copyright laws will not be accepted. The director can assist a donor in selecting an appropriate addition for the Muhlenberg Community Library collection. Bookplates may be provided for gifts. Receipts for materials donated to the library can be provided, but placing a value on the material is the responsibility of the donor. The library reserves the right to sell, give to other libraries or dispose of gift materials that are not added to the collection. The director may approve exceptions to this gift policy.

Collection Maintenance (Weeding)

A practical, useful collection will be maintained through a continual process of discard and addition. Materials are withdrawn based upon their currency, no longer of interest or in demand, unnecessary duplicates or multiple copies, worn, or mutilated. Weeding should be done with the same care, thought, criteria, and judgment as selection. Books generally recognized as having



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extraordinary literary merit, by local or regional authors, or of local or regional significance will be retained unless their physical condition merits removal.

Request for Reconsideration

The Muhlenberg Community Library recognizes the right of individuals to question materials in the collection. Serious consideration will be given to each patron's opinion.

The Muhlenberg Community Library subscribes to the statement of intellectual freedom as found in *The Freedom to Read*, a joint statement by the American Library Association and the Association of American Publishers.

The Board of Trustees of the Muhlenberg Community Library believes that censorship is a purely individual matter and that while anyone is free to reject for himself/herself library material of which they do not approve, an individual cannot exercise this right of censorship to restrict the freedom of others to read, view or hear.

Parents/guardians have the responsibility to guide and direct the choices of their minor children. The library does not stand *in loco parentis*, that is in the place of a parent, charged with a parent's rights, responsibilities or duties.

If a patron wishes to express his/her opinion in writing, the following procedure is followed:

1. No materials shall be removed from the collection until the reevaluation process has been completed.
2. The patron is given a copy of this Collection Development Policy and a Request for Reconsideration of Materials form.
3. A knowledgeable staff member gives the patron an explanation of the procedure.
4. The patron completes the form and submits it to the Library Director.
5. The Library Director reads/views/listens to the challenged material.
6. The Library Director presents the Request for Reconsideration to the Library Board of Trustees.
7. The Director and Board will review the request and make a judgment as to whether the material was appropriately selected for the collection under the guidelines of the Collection Development Policy. The number of requests received will not be a factor in reaching a decision.
8. The Director will reply to the patron in writing as soon as practical.
9. The Director of Muhlenberg Community Library will apprise the Berks County Public Libraries Administrator of the request and the decision.
10. Patrons still wishing to express their concerns about materials in the collection may be heard during a regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Muhlenberg Community Library.

Reviewed by Board of Trustees 4/9/2007
Reviewed by Board of Trustees 6/8/2009
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