

Bethlehem Public Library Collection Development Policy

Policy approved by the Board of Trustees, November 1989
Policy revised and approved by the Board of Trustees, March 1996
Policy revised and approved by the Board of Trustees, December 1999
Policy revised and approved by the Board of Trustees, June 2006
Policy revised and approved by the Board of Trustees, March 2012

Bethlehem Public Library provides free, open and equal access to ideas and information for all members of the community. The library recognizes its responsibility to carefully select and maintain its print, non-print, and digital collections in support of its mission to make its resources available to every patron regardless of national origin, age, background or personal beliefs.

Expanding areas of knowledge, changing social values, technological advances and cultural differences require flexibility, open-mindedness and responsiveness in the selection, evaluation and reevaluation of all resources.

Access

Bethlehem Public Library affirms as part of this collection development policy the following documents of the American Library Association: *Library Bill of Rights*, *Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights*, *Freedom to Read Statement*, and *Freedom to View Statement*. These documents may be viewed on the ALA website www.ala.org.

Responsibility

Authority and responsibility for the selection of library resources are delegated to the library director by the board of trustees. At the discretion of the director, qualified staff are assigned selection responsibilities.

Selection

Standard professional journals, as well as popular and local media sources, are used in the selection process. The library's acquisition of any resource does not constitute endorsement.

While a single standard cannot be applied, potential resources are judged by appropriate criteria:

- relevance to community needs, interests and demand
- balance with the current collection
- suitability to the intended audience of subject, style, format, interest and reading level
- reputation of the author, composer, filmmaker, publisher or producer
- quality of writing, design, illustration or production

Withdrawal

Resources are withdrawn from the collection in order to maintain its usefulness, currency, relevance and condition. Withdrawn resources may be, sold, offered to other libraries or non-profit organizations, recycled, discontinued or discarded.

Reconsideration

Bethlehem Public Library recognizes that some resources may be considered controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons. Selection will not be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the basis of this policy's guidelines.

Library resources will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of their contents.

Responsibility for monitoring a child's access to resources rests with the parent or legal guardian.

Patrons requesting that resources be withdrawn must complete the *Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources* form and submit it to the library director. The matter will be given serious attention and a response will be made within a reasonable time. The request will be considered in light of the library's collection development policy, the principles of the ALA *Library Bill of Rights*, the opinions of the various reviewing sources, and any other appropriate source. The library director will notify the patron of the results of the reconsideration.

The director's decision may be appealed at the board level.

Policy review

This collection development policy is available to the public at the library or on the library website. It will be reviewed by the library director and the board of trustees every five years.