

Bethlehem Public Library Collection Development Policy

I. Introduction

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 the collection in support of its mission and 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.

The purpose of this policy is to provide direction for the acquisition and development of the library's collections. Resources include, but are not necessarily limited to, print, non-print and digital media.

The library will acquire:

- ❑ resources and thoughtful interpretations that document and illuminate the past.
- ❑ resources representing various contemporary points of view which are of current interest and possible future significance, including resources which reflect current conditions, trends and controversies.
- ❑ resources designed to increase an individual's ability to function effectively as a productive member of society.
- ❑ resources which provide a meaningful aesthetic experience, stimulate the imagination, and increase an individual's potential for creativity.
- ❑ resources, including the experimental or controversial, which extend an individual's capacity to understand the world.
- ❑ resources which enhance an individual's enjoyment of life.
- ❑ resources which meet the diverse recreational, cultural, informational and developmental needs of children and youth.

II. Access

Unrestricted access to ideas, information and the creative experience is of vital importance to every individual. Therefore, 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, Free Access to Libraries for Minors, Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks, and Freedom to View Statement. These documents may be viewed on the ALA website www.ala.org

III. Responsibility for the Selection of Library Resources

Authority and responsibility for the selection of library resources is delegated to the library director by the board of trustees. At the discretion of the director, staff who are qualified by reason of education, training and experience are given the responsibility to select resources within the framework of this policy.

IV. Criteria for Selection

Resources are evaluated as a whole and not on the basis of a particular section or sections. A resource will not be excluded from the library's collection because it presents an aspect of life realistically or because of frankness of expression.

While a single standard cannot be applied, potential resources are judged by appropriate criteria. In some instances, these criteria include artistic or literary merit, scholarship, or the value of the resource to the informational needs of the community. In other instances, the criterion may be substantial demand. The library's decision to acquire material does not constitute endorsement of the material's content.

The following criteria will apply to purchased and donated resources, as well as selected online sites.

- relevance to community needs
- potential and/or known demand
- relative importance compared with resources on the same subject already in the collection
- quality of writing, design, illustration or production
- current popularity and/or permanence
- suitability to the intended audience of subject, style, format, interest and reading level

- ❑ reputation of the publisher or producer, authority and significance of the author, composer, filmmaker, etc.
- ❑ favorable reviews in (but not limited to) the following sources:
 - Library Journal*
 - Publisher's Weekly*
 - School Library Journal*
 - Booklist*
 - The Horn Book*
 - AudioFile*
 - VOYA*
 - Billboard*
 - New York Times*
 - Librarian's Index to the Internet*
 - local newspapers
- ❑ availability and accessibility of the same resources in other Upper Hudson Library System member libraries or through interlibrary loan.

V. Special Collections

In addition to the standard resources acquired by the library, the following special collections will be maintained. These collections may or may not circulate.

Adult Services

1. *Reference*

This collection provides access to general and specialized print and online resources for in-library use. Resources in this collection will supply as many current facts and figures as possible with a minimum of duplication.

2. *Local History/Genealogy*

This collection is intended to aid in researching local and family history. Significant materials relating to the Town of Bethlehem and communities of the Bethlehem area will be collected and maintained. Local families' histories and reference sources on genealogical research will be collected.

3. *Periodicals and Newspapers*

The collection contains print and online publications. Titles are selected primarily from standard reviewing sources.

4. *Maps*

The collection includes Bethlehem tax maps, local street maps, regional, topographic and recreational maps, U.S. states, selected major U.S. cities, Canadian provinces, New York counties and New York State. The map collection supplements printed atlases and online map resources.

5. *Rental Books*

A supplemental collection of high-demand best-sellers is available for short-term rental for a nominal fee. Rental books cannot be requested through the online reserve system.

6. *Videorecordings*

The collection includes popular films, award-winning and classic titles, and recreational, instructional and educational videorecordings.

7. *Recorded Music*

The collection includes a variety of music representing many cultures, time periods and musical genres.

8. *Spoken Word Recordings*

The collection includes popular fiction and nonfiction, classic literature and instructional materials. Unabridged versions are preferred if available.

9. *CD-ROMs*

The CD-ROM collection includes computer instructional materials, study aids, genealogy resources, and other materials. Juvenile CD-ROMs include educational games and topical materials on nature, music, geography, reading and math skills, and other subjects.

Youth Services

1. *Reference*

This collection provides access to general and specialized print and online resources for in-library use. Sources are chosen to satisfy informational and reader's advisory needs of children through middle school level and the adults responsible for their care and education. Homework support and literature are stressed.

2. *Parent-Teacher Section*

This collection of books and periodicals offers caregivers and educators resources to assist them in the care and education of children from birth through middle school. The collection also includes bibliotherapeutic picture books.

3. *Educational Games*

This collection for young children includes electronic games, puzzles, and toy books for in-library use.

4. *Videorecordings for Young Children*

This collection includes educational and recreational videos for children from birth through pre-school.

5. *Spoken Word Recordings*

This collection includes Easy fiction, juvenile fiction and nonfiction, and young adult fiction.

6. *Young Adult*

This collection includes fiction and periodicals for students at the middle school level. Young adult patrons also access the adult services collections.

Library Website

The library's Internet website www.bethlehempubliclibrary.org provides access to the online catalog, subscription databases selected by the library, Upper Hudson Library System or New York Online Virtual Education Library (NOVEL), and Internet sites selected by the library. The library's Internet Policy is intended to augment the Collection Development Policy, determining the content appropriately accessed via the Internet.

Gifts

Gifts of books and other resources are accepted with the understanding that they may be used or disposed of at the library's discretion. Gift materials are subject to the same selection standards as purchased materials.

VI. Withdrawal of Materials

The process of removing items from the collection is an integral part of collection development. Materials are withdrawn from the collection in order to maintain its usefulness, currency, relevance, and condition. Responsibility for collection maintenance and for the disposition of withdrawn resources rests with the library director and designated staff. Withdrawn items may be sold, offered to other libraries or non-profit organizations, recycled, or discarded.

VII. Reconsideration of Library Resources

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 the principles stated in this collection development policy.

Library resources will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of their contents, and no item will be placed on closed shelves except for the express purpose of protecting it from abuse or theft.

Responsibility for monitoring a child's access to resources rests with the parent(s) or legal guardian(s). Selection of library resources will not be inhibited by the possibility that works may come into a child's possession.

Patrons requesting that resources be withdrawn must complete the Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources form (appended) and submit it to the library director. The patron should be assured that the matter will be given serious attention and that a response will be forthcoming 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.

VIII. Review of Policy

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.

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.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY RESOURCES

Bethlehem Public Library * 451 Delaware Avenue * Delmar, NY * 12054

Name _____ Phone _____

(please print)

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Do you represent: yourself? organization? _____

1. Resource on which you are commenting:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> book | <input type="checkbox"/> video/DVD | <input type="checkbox"/> audio recording |
| <input type="checkbox"/> periodical | <input type="checkbox"/> electronic information | <input type="checkbox"/> library program |
| <input type="checkbox"/> display | <input type="checkbox"/> other _____ | |

Title _____

Author/producer _____

2. What brought this resource to your attention?

3. Have you examined the entire resource?

4. What concerns you about the resource? (Use other side or additional pages if necessary.)

5. What resource(s) do you suggest to provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic?

Signature

Date

Return to Library Director * Bethlehem Public Library * 451 Delaware Avenue * Delmar NY 12054