

# **Section 3: Collection Development Policy**

## ***Purpose***

This policy is intended to provide guidance for the selection and evaluation of materials for the St. Charles Parish Library. It should be used by staff fulfilling these responsibilities and may also be used to further public understanding of the purpose and nature of the library's collection.

As the library community changes, this policy may be evaluated and revised to provide guidance for implementing changes in the collection.

## ***Service Policy***

The goal of the St. Charles Parish Library is to provide courteous service of excellent quality patterned to satisfy the needs and interests of the citizens of St. Charles Parish as assessed by the Board and/or library administration, and to reflect the expressed desires and comments of the community.

## ***The Community***

The community served by the St. Charles Parish Library consists of people who live, work, go to school, or own property in St. Charles Parish. The parish has a population of approximately 52,780 and is primarily rural. It is divided by the Mississippi River resulting in what is commonly referred to as the West Bank and East Bank of the parish. There are public, parochial and private schools throughout the parish.

## ***Philosophy of Selection***

The St. Charles Parish Library endorses the principles documented by the American Library Association in the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement. The library provides a broad choice of materials to meet the informational, educational, cultural and recreational needs of its community; while seeking to bring awareness of cultures, traditions and ideas not represented in the local community.

Books and non-book materials will be added to the collection with the purpose of fulfilling the goal of the service policy, with the imposition of no restrictions other than those intrinsic in this policy. Recognizing the dangers of censorship to the acquisition of knowledge and the freedom of the individual none will be condoned either by library authority or outside pressure. This also applies to labeling which is an attempt to prejudice and a censor's tool. With the intention of making selection inclusive rather than exclusive, the selection staff will strive to select materials necessary to satisfy the interests, needs and demands of the community.

The library system has two regional libraries, four branches, a bookmobile and a planetarium. Materials at all libraries are a shared resource, and access to these materials

is made possible through the library's automated library system. The library provides a 5 day-a-week courier service to move materials between branches as needed.

A broad selection of circulating print and non-print materials are available to accommodate the diversity of tastes, reading levels, and interests of patrons of all ages. The library cannot possibly acquire all print and non-print materials but employs a policy of selectivity in acquisitions. New formats to be considered for the collection will be evaluated before decisions are made to acquire and add them to the library's collection.

The library upholds the rights of all individuals to secure information representing all points of view, even though the content may be controversial or unacceptable to others. Selection is based upon selection criteria and principle rather than personal opinion.

*The Library Bill of Rights and Freedom to Read Statement can be found in Appendix A and Appendix B of this policy.*

## **Selection Criteria**

All materials added to the collection, whether purchased or donated, are considered using the criteria listed below. An item does not need to meet every criteria listed, but it should meet several to be added to the collection.

- Appropriateness to library's service policy
- Popular interest
- Contemporary significance
- Permanent value
- Accuracy
- Timeliness or currency of information
- Local emphasis
- Readability or ability to sustain interest
- Treatment of subject appropriate to age of intended audience
- Reputation of author, publisher, producer or illustrator
- Creative, literary or technical quality
- Critical assessments/reviews in a variety of professional journals
- Format and ease of use
- Circulation as monitored through the automated system
- Cost and availability
- Value of resource in relation to its cost
- Relationship to existing materials in collection
- Proper binding to withstand library usage
- Requests by patrons
- Community interests and needs

- Anticipated use
- Availability elsewhere

## ***Selection Tools***

Professional librarians responsible for the selection of library materials use a variety of tools to make decisions regarding their selections. Selection tools include, but are not limited to:

- Reviews from various professional library journals or periodicals such as:
  - Publishers Weekly
  - Booklist
  - Library Journal
  - School Library Journal
  - Horn Book
  - VOYA
  - Video Librarian
- Books in Print information
- Online bookstore information
- Individual expertise of staff
- Recommendations from other libraries and/or librarians
- Recommendations from staff
- Publisher information (websites, catalogs, pamphlets, etc.)
- Standard bibliographies (ex. Core Collection series)
- Professional conferences and exhibits
- Preview of AV materials by selector at trade shows and conferences
- Blogs
- User/patron requests
- Reference logs

## ***Responsibility for Collection***

The authority and responsibility for the selection of library materials rests ultimately with the Library Director. Selection is delegated to the professional library staff under the library director's direction.

## ***Requests / Suggestions for Purchase***

The library encourages requests and suggestions from the St. Charles Parish Library community in regards to the collection. A request or suggestion allows a patron to request that a particular item or subject be considered for purchase by the library. Request cards are available at all libraries and staff will assist patrons in submitting their requests. All requests and suggestions are subject to the same selection criteria as other materials and are not automatically purchased or added to the collection. This process enables the library to develop a collection which will serve the interests and needs of the community.

*The current Request Card can be found in Appendix C of this policy.*

## ***Duplication of Material***

Multiple copies of materials are purchased in response to user demand as determined by number of requests/holds per item, anticipated popularity and monitoring of the collection. For popular fiction and non-fiction titles the St. Charles Parish Library attempts to maintain a ratio of one copy for every 5 patron holds placed through the automated library system.

## ***Replacements***

Replacement of withdrawn materials is not automatic, and the decision to replace an item is based on the selection criteria as well as the following:

- Availability of copies in the system
- Popular interest
- Adequacy of coverage in the subject area
- Cost and availability

## ***Donations***

The St. Charles Parish Library accepts donations of certain books and AV materials. The items donated must be appropriate, timely and in good condition. Donations must meet the same selection criteria as purchased materials and are subject to the following limitations:

- The library does not accept materials with restrictions
- The library retains unconditional ownership of the gift.

- The library makes the final decision on the use or other disposition of the gift.
- The library reserves the right to decide the conditions of display, housing and access to the materials.

Donations must not represent unnecessary duplication.

The following are examples of items not likely to be put into the collection: Readers Digest condensed books, textbooks, outdated encyclopedias or other reference materials, items that are worn out or in poor condition, and formats or collections no longer being purchased by the library.

Any circulation staff member at any of the branches may physically accept donated items, but only the Technical Services Librarian has the authority to decide whether the items will be included in the collection.

At present some items not added to the collection are donated to the Friends of the St. Charles Parish Library or other non-profit organizations. Items which these organizations will not accept and which cannot be included in the library collection must be discarded.

Gifts are acknowledged only by receipt of a St. Charles Parish Library Donation Acknowledgement Form at the time of donation.

*The current St. Charles Parish Library Donation Acknowledgement Form can be found in Appendix D of this policy.*

## **Memorials**

Monetary gifts to the collection are welcome and may be designated as memorials. Donors of the funds may suggest subjects or titles to be acquired with their donation, as well as suggesting home locations for the materials, but the library reserves the right of final decision.

All memorial items are designated as such with a memorial plate being placed in each item. Notes and subjects are added to the catalogued record of each item so that these items are searchable in the library's online catalog. Memorials are acknowledged by a letter from the director to the donor and the family of the person in whose memory items are donated.

*The current St. Charles Parish Library Memorial Book Program brochure can be found in Appendix E of this policy.*

## ***Request for Reconsideration***

The library welcomes comments, suggestions or opinions by patrons regarding appropriateness of materials in the collection. These suggestions will be considered and governed by the Collection Development Policy in making additions or deleting items from the collection. If a patron takes issue with a certain item in the collection, the staff is available to discuss concerns and identify alternate materials if possible. If the staff cannot satisfy the patron's concern, then the patron can choose to complete a Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials Form to be submitted to the library director. Complaints do not result in the immediate withdrawal of the item from public use. To do so would constitute *de facto* censorship.

Once the complaint has been fully completed by the patron and submitted, the director will form a committee. The committee will consider the complaint and examine the item if necessary before recommending appropriate action to the director. The director or a committee member will explain the committee's decision to the patron.

***The current Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials Form can be found in Appendix F of this policy.***

## ***Collection Maintenance***

All library materials are initially processed to ensure their maximum use under normal circumstances. Materials that are checked out by patrons are inspected for damages upon their return to the library. Items that are damaged but still usable are mended and returned to the collection. Patrons are charged damaged fees in accordance with the Fines & Fees Guidelines. Patrons may be charged a set fee for items they check out that are lost and/or damaged beyond repair.

***The current St. Charles Parish Library Fines & Fees Guidelines can be found in Appendix G of this policy.***

## ***Weeding and Deselection***

Deselection is important in making sure the library's collection remains vital and useful and is an important aspect of collection development. This task takes considerable time and knowledge of the library collection to be done correctly. Librarians responsible for the selection of certain materials are also responsible for the deselection of the same materials. The librarians, under the coordination of the Assistant Director of Public Services and Technical Services Librarian, will evaluate the collection periodically for the purpose of discarding and/or replacing items in poor physical condition; eliminating items with obsolete, misleading or superseded information; or reducing the number of

copies of titles whose relevance to the community has lessened. Due to space limitations organized weeding projects are necessary and should take place on a regular basis.

Weeding criteria is based on the CREW method of evaluation developed by Joseph P. Segal. This process (Continuous Review, Evaluation and Weeding), used the following criteria to evaluate a title's current usefulness to the collection:

- M = Misleading (and/or factually inaccurate)
- U = Ugly (worn and beyond repair)
- S = Superseded by a new edition or by a better book on the subject
- T = Trivial (of no discernible literary or scientific merit)
- Y = Your collection has no use for this book (i.e. irrelevant to the needs and interests of the community)

The date of publication, the last date circulated, and the number of circulations in the recent years are also useful indicators of the above factors and will be taken into consideration when determining what materials should be weeded.

## ***The Collection***

### **Adult Collection**

*Adult Fiction:* The collection includes a wide variety of contemporary fiction representing a wide variety of genres, as well as classic works of enduring value.

*Adult Nonfiction:* The library aims at acquiring non-fiction materials for the current needs, interests and activities of adult patrons. Selection is based not only on the merit of the work but also in relation to the wide variety of needs, interests and demands of the community. Variety and balance of opinion are sought whenever possible.

### **Juvenile Collection**

The juvenile collection's primary goal is to encourage and promote life-long reading habits, while satisfying the informational and recreational needs of children. Materials are selected that meet the general needs of the majority of children in the community.

Primary responsibility for a child's reading rests with the parents or guardians of that child. The library does not stand *in loco parentis*.

*Picture Books - Fiction:* This collection is comprised of picture books and beginning readers. Illustrations are the predominant feature of picture books which are generally designed to be read to children. Books for beginning readers are characterized by a controlled vocabulary, larger print, heavy use of illustrations, and a limited number of pages. There are designated collections for holiday books, concept books, easy readers (beginning chapter books), and board books, within the picture book collection.

*Picture Books - Nonfiction:* Books that are picture book format, but nonfiction in nature, are included in this collection.

*Juvenile Fiction:* Materials in this collection feature subject matter of interest to children with very few illustrations.

*Juvenile Nonfiction:* The materials in this collection are aimed to serve the information needs of elementary and middle school students. The subject matter, vocabulary, organization and scope are age-appropriate.

## **Young Adult Collection**

The young adult collection is designed to be transitional in scope between juvenile and adult reading materials. This collection is comprised of materials pertaining to current needs, whether recreational, informational, or educational. Materials in this collection are selected based on the same criteria as adult materials with an added emphasis on the special needs of young adults. Some materials which are considered adult materials may be added to this collection to provide access for school assignments.

*Young Adult Fiction:* Selection for this collection is based on popularity of materials with teens; relevant social issues; age of the main characters, use of language, theme or subject matter. As far as possible, materials reflecting diverse views on controversial topics are included.

*Young Adult Non-Fiction:* This collection is comprised of materials in which the theme or subject matter is of interest to and intended for young adults.

## **Graphic Novels**

Graphic novels have gained literary acceptance as a new medium through which a combination of text and sequential art are used to tell a story. These books are primarily pictorial, with text and dialog working together to propel the narrative. The library has added graphic novels to the juvenile, young adult and adult collections.

## **Paperbacks**

Paperback collections are available in juvenile, young adult and adult levels. These are soft cover books that are smaller in size than the typical hardcover or trade paperback book. They are shelved separately from hardcover books and are given minimal cataloging.

## **Reference Collection**

The library maintains a reference collection that is intended to serve the informational needs of library patrons. These sources are designed to be consulted for information rather than to be read consecutively. They are generally used to provide quick, concise, and current information. Reference items are non-circulating and are kept in the library for use by all patrons. Reference materials may include, and are not limited to: bibliographies, indexes, directories, dictionaries, encyclopedias, catalogs, yearbooks and

annuals, statistical abstracts, atlases and gazetteers, biographical dictionaries, and almanacs. The materials in the reference collection are selected according to the same general criteria as non-fiction materials.

### **Large Print Collection**

The large print collection provides library materials in a format with larger text size for those who need or prefer it. This collection is comprised primarily of adult popular fiction, along with high interest non-fiction. There are also a limited number of juvenile and young adult large print books in the collection.

### **Magazines & Newspapers**

The library's magazine and newspaper collection provides information on a wide range of subjects and recreational interests. Selection for magazines is based on community needs and interests, with cost as a consideration. Whether the magazine has local or regional interest is also considered. Magazines that are highly technical or scholarly are generally not included. Current issues of magazines are non-circulating and are kept in the library for use by all patrons. Back issues of magazines circulate at all branches.

Newspapers published locally are kept at all branches, and some papers from a few major geographical areas are kept at the regional libraries. As with magazines, current newspapers are non-circulating.

### **Audiobooks**

The juvenile, young adult and adult audiobook collections are intended to meet the needs and interests of those patrons who prefer to listen to books. Selection criteria are similar to those used for print materials. Duplication of titles is not recommended among branches. Audiobook formats are continually evolving and the library evaluates new formats for inclusion in the system as needed. The library currently has audiobooks on compact discs and Playaways, which are pre-loaded audiobooks.

### **Videos / DVDs**

The library purchases juvenile, young adult and adult DVDs using the same criteria for selection used for other formats. Additional considerations used when purchasing DVDs include:

- Materials should be of educational and documentary nature; movies based on books or plays; classic films or other entertainment films that meet the library's selection criteria
- There will be a six-month waiting period before purchases of new entertainment releases
- The library will generally not purchase films with extremely high levels of graphic violence or sexual content. Exceptions may be made for award-winning or classic films based books.

Playaway Views, preloaded video players, are available in the juvenile collection.

## **Digital, Electronic & Internet Resources**

In addition to the print and non-print resources in our collection, we also provide Internet access through computer workstations at all six branches. Wireless Internet is also available at all six branches of the library. While a vast amount of information is freely available on the Internet, St. Charles Parish Library provides a number of electronic and digital resources that gives users access to:

- Databases, including but not limited to, continuing education courses, auto repair information, genealogy resources, career and health information, encyclopedias, etc.
- Magazines and newspapers
- Electronic books and electronic audiobooks
- Electronic films and television shows

These resources may be accessed through a variety of methods including downloading, streaming or Internet access.

Some of these resources have been selected and purchased by the library for the benefit of the citizens of St. Charles Parish, while others are available through cooperative agreements with other parish library systems or through the State Library of Louisiana.

## **Louisiana Room - St. Charles Parish Collection**

The library maintains a special collection of materials about Louisiana with a primary focus on St. Charles Parish history and genealogy. The genealogy materials are intended to be used as self-service items and are designed for patrons in the initial stages of researching family history and local genealogy. This collection is located in the Louisiana Room on the second floor of the West Regional Library.

The Louisiana Room houses microfilm from the various United States censuses as well as back issues of local newspapers on microfilm. The Louisiana Room also houses the video archives of the St. Charles Parish Council meetings. These videos may not be checked out, but may be viewed in the archive room located in the Louisiana Room.

## **Materials for Public Review**

In support of area industries, as well as major local and state projects, the library houses a limited number of public review documents. These documents also cover topics under study by various parish task forces or committees and are housed on a temporary basis at various branches throughout the system.

## **Vertical Files**

The library's vertical files contain newspaper clippings, maps, pamphlets, and other materials of primarily local information.

## **Professional Collection**

The Professional Collection is a collection of materials intended for use by library staff only. This collection includes materials of professional nature to enhance the job skills of the staff; materials that may be used in conjunction with planning, promoting and presenting library programs; and materials that address library management topics.

## **ILL (Interlibrary Loan)**

Interlibrary Loan, also known as ILL, or resource sharing, is the sharing of books, articles and other materials among libraries. The State Library of Louisiana hosts a statewide interlibrary loan system called LoanShark, of which the St. Charles Parish Library is a participant.

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