

Chapter 7

Collection Development

The Plattsmouth Public Library is a community institution that attempts to meet the educational, informational, cultural, and recreational needs of the community's residents. The library maintains an open, unbiased environment and upholds the public's right of access to information. Collection development is an ongoing activity, and the collection evolves as the needs of the community change and as improved technology provides additional or alternative resources.

7.1 Selection of Materials

The selection of materials is the responsibility of the library director and other designated staff members who adhere to accepted professional practices and consider the following criteria:

- Relevance to community interests and needs
- Literary quality based on awards or reviews in the popular media or professional library sources
- Reputation and significance of the author\producer\publisher
- Popular appeal
- Number and nature of requests from the public
- Relevance of the subject matter to the collection and representing a wide variety of perspectives
- Accuracy, currency, and validity, specifically in non-fiction
- The need for self-study materials for students at all levels of learning
- Publication date
- Scarcity of materials on the subject
- Historical value or local significance
- The need for additional or duplicate materials in the collection
- The physical format – well-constructed and appropriate format
- Physical limitations of the building
- Budgetary considerations
- State guidelines

The library strives to provide a balanced, diverse, and inclusive collection of materials to anticipate the needs and interests of potential users. A balanced collection attempts to represent all sides of controversial issues as far as availability of materials, space, and budget allow. The race, religion, nationality, or political or social views of an author or creator; offensive language; depictions or descriptions of violence or sexually explicit activity; controversial content of an item; or endorsement or disapproval by an individual or group in the community does not cause an item automatically to be included or excluded from the library's collection. The library does not promulgate particular beliefs or views, nor is the selection of any given item equivalent to endorsement of the viewpoint of the author expressed therein.

The library will collect supplementary and enrichment materials for students as warranted. The

library does not attempt to acquire textbooks that specifically support local curricula; rather, it may acquire textbooks for general use by the public. The collections will not be designed to provide specific curriculum materials. Multiple copies of popular items may be purchased to meet short-term demand.

The library will have materials available in a variety of formats when practical and available. Regardless of an item's popularity, the library may choose not to select it if the available format is not durable enough to withstand reasonable library use or if it would require excessive staff time to maintain.

Website links and databases will be selected using the same criteria.

The library director will allocate funds, based on the annual budget, to the different collections based on current needs.

Objections to items in the collection should be made in writing to the library director following the "Request for Reconsideration of Materials" policy. Materials that no longer meet the needs of the community and no longer support the library's collection will be withdrawn and disposed of in accordance with the library's "Deselection of Materials" policy.

7.2 Intellectual Freedom

The Library Board and staff believe that censorship is an individual matter and declare that while anyone is free to reject materials of which they do not approve, no one can exercise the right of censorship to restrict the freedom of others to read as protected under the First Amendment. The Board and staff believe that access to all materials legally obtainable should be assured to the public, and policies should not unjustly exclude materials even if offensive to the library staff or a Board member personally or to some members of the community.

The Board and staff declare that materials meeting selection criteria will be accessible to all customers. The responsibility for monitoring a child's reading, listening, and viewing rests with the parent or legal guardian. Selection of materials for the library is not restricted by the possibility that children may obtain materials that their parents consider inappropriate.

The Board and staff defend the principles of the freedom to read. The Board declares it will adhere to and support the Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to View, and the Freedom to Read statements as adopted by the American Library Association.

7.3 Labeling

The library strives to provide a diversity of viewpoints in every format. The library does not endorse the use of prejudicial labels which are designed to restrict access to materials. However, directional aids are used to facilitate access by making it easier for users to locate resources. Users may choose to consult or ignore the directional aids at their own discretion. These aids are

descriptive rather than restrictive since individuals are capable of making up their own minds about controversial subjects and the library supports the free exchange of ideas.

7.4 Requests for Reconsideration

The library welcomes comments and suggestions from Cass County residents regarding the continued appropriateness of materials in the collection or programs offered, especially with regard to outdated materials. Suggestions and recommendations will be considered and utilized by the library in the ongoing process of collection development.

Individuals may take issue with library materials that do not support their own views or values on a subject or that are not compatible with their beliefs. Staff is available to discuss concerns and to identify alternate materials that may be available. If a customer's concern is not satisfied through discussion with staff, a formal written request for reconsideration of materials may be submitted to the library director. Copies of this form are available at the circulation desk or from the library director.

The Plattsburgh Public Library is not a judicial body. Laws governing obscenity, subversive materials, and other questionable matters are subject to interpretation by the courts. Therefore, no challenged material will be removed solely based on a complaint of obscenity or any other category covered by law until a local court of competent jurisdiction has ruled against the material.

For a request for reconsideration to be considered, the patron must have read the complete book or listened to/watched the whole work, and the form must be completed in full. The library staff and the director consider each request in terms of the criteria outlined in the library's materials selection policy and the principles of the ALA Library Bill of Rights and related statements, printed reviews, and other appropriate sources. Excerpts will not be assessed out of context. The director will respond, in writing, within 30 days of receipt to the customer's request for consideration. The response will indicate the action to be taken and reasons for or against the request.

Appeals are directed to the Library Board. The appeal will not re-litigate the decision. It will focus only on whether the policies and procedures were followed by the director and other library staff. If the selection criteria weren't appropriately applied, the Board should remand the matter back to the director.

A maximum of 5 requests per person can be submitted annually. If multiple items are being challenged, a separate reconsideration form must be completed for each item. If an item has already been challenged, a new challenge will not be considered for 5 years after the previous challenge.

7.5 Deselection of Materials

In order to maintain the collection in optimum condition, materials that no longer fit the mission and service priorities of the library will be withdrawn from the collection. The director or designated staff will use their judgment in removing from the collection materials which are no longer useful or are not in a condition suitable for circulation. Circulation history will be considered as well as the same criteria used in materials selection. Decisions will be made based on acceptable professional practices, such as those described in The CREW Method, and the professional judgment of the director or designated staff.

Website links and databases will be removed following acceptable professional practices.

In accordance with local law, materials no longer useful to the library may be given to other libraries, sold for the benefit of the library, or discarded after being declared surplus property with the City Administrator.

7.6 Gifts and Donations

The library seeks and accepts unrestricted gifts of books and other materials with the understanding that they will be added to the library collection only as needed. Donations should be clean and in good condition. The library does not accept donations of magazines, textbooks, encyclopedias, or Reader's Digest Condensed books.

All donations are accepted without condition and immediately become the property of the library. They cannot be returned. Some donations will be added to the collection. The same principles of selection that are applied to purchases are applied to gifts. The rest will be donated to the Friends of the Plattsmouth Public Library for their book sales. Donations added to the collection may subsequently be withdrawn from the collection under the same criteria that are applied to purchased items.

Some gifts cannot be used to full advantage because of duplication or insufficient value. The donor of any gift should understand that the Library retains unconditional ownership and makes the final decision on the acceptance, use, and disposition of all donated items and funds.

Items donated by specific groups or organizations that are added to the collection may have a nameplate indicating the donor. No other information will be placed on this nameplate.

Items donated in memory of individuals will be considered for addition to the collection based on established selection criteria. Memorial nameplates may be added at the discretion of the Library Director and the donor. These items may be withdrawn from the collection under the same criteria that are applied to purchased items.

Upon request of the donor, the library will provide a receipt for tax purposes. The library cannot assign a dollar value to donations.

Unrestricted real and/or fiscal gifts should be made to the Plattsmouth Public Library Foundation.

When the library receives a cash gift for the purchase of materials, whether as a memorial or for any other purpose, the general nature or subject area of the materials to be purchased will be based upon the wishes of the donor or the honoree's family. Selection of specific titles, however, will be made by the library staff in accordance with the needs and selection policies of the library.

Approved by the Library Board, 9/30/2015

Reviewed and approved by the Library Board, 8/29/2018

Revised and approved by the Library Board, 6/28/2023, 11/26/2025