

# Collection Development Policy

## Statement of Purpose

The Siuslaw Public Library District Board recognizes that its patrons are diverse, with different interests, backgrounds, cultural heritages, social values, and needs. The District further recognizes that public libraries provide free and convenient access to informational, cultural, educational, and recreational materials.

The District aims to provide equal access to all people. To achieve this goal, the District must ensure that its collections remain current and responsive to the needs of its patrons and that those materials are easily accessible through appropriate technology.

Selection of materials by the library does not mean endorsement of the contents or the views expressed in those materials.

## Authority and Responsibility for Selection

The Library Director ultimately is responsible for selecting materials. The Director may authorize members of the staff who are qualified through education and training to select materials. The Board of Directors approves the policy for selecting and acquiring materials. All staff members and the general public are encouraged to recommend materials for consideration. Collection development should not be viewed by groups or individuals as a potential tool to be used either to advocate or oppose personal views.

## Intellectual Freedom

The District believes that the right to read and access materials of varying viewpoints is an important part of the intellectual freedom that is basic to democracy. The principles of intellectual freedom are guaranteed in the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. In keeping with those principles, the District will favor no viewpoint and subscribes to these basic documents as official policy:

1. The American Library Association's (ALA) Library Bill of Rights;
2. ALA's Freedom to Read statement;
3. ALA's Freedom to View statement; and
4. ALA's Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors.

Copies of these documents are attached to this policy. The Board considers all materials selected under the Collection Development Policy to be

constitutionally protected under the First Amendment unless materials are considered unprotected by judicial action. Material under court consideration will remain in the active collection and not be considered for removal until the judicial determination is made and all appeals completed.

The District also believes in the right of library patrons to question the inclusion of material in the library collection. This process is outlined in the District's Request for Reconsideration of Library Material Policy.

### Selection Criteria

Materials are selected for their literary or artistic merit, accuracy, utility, entertainment value, and current or historical interest. Generally, except for items of special local interest or when it is possible to evaluate materials directly, items are selected based on favorable reviews from library and literary journals, inclusion in special lists, patron or staff recommendations, popularity, and/or media coverage.

The Library District works to maintain a collection that includes material on many subjects and points of view, in keeping with the community's interests. The content of the collection is constantly reviewed so that gaps in various subject areas and formats may be filled. Each item must be considered with appropriate standards for its type and audience. Some materials may be judged primarily in terms of artistic merit, scholarship, informational, or historical significance; others are selected to satisfy recreational and entertainment needs. With restricted budgets and space, the District emphasizes quality rather than quantity, balancing the value of and demand for materials.

Criteria to be considered in adding specific materials to the library collection include, but are not limited to the following: collection objectives, patron requests, existing subject coverage, community relevance, timeliness of topics, audience, current or historical significance of the author or subject, diversity of viewpoint, effective expression, accuracy of information, justifiability of cost in relation to budget and need, and physical and technical qualities of production. Patron requests may also be fulfilled by resource sharing with other libraries.

Individual items which are controversial or offensive to some patrons, board members, or staff may be selected if their inclusion will contribute to the range of viewpoints in the collection as a whole and the effectiveness of the library's ability to serve the people of the library district. Selection will not be inhibited by the possibility that children may have access to the item.

Donated materials become the property of the library and will be accepted with the understanding that they are subject to the same selection and weeding/discarding of material process as purchased materials. Materials which are not included in the collection will not be returned to the donor, in accordance with the Gifts and Donations Policy. The library does not assign value to gifts.

Donations for memorial items are welcomed. The library takes suggestions based on the interests of the person being memorialized but cannot guarantee that materials on those subjects will be purchased. Books and other gifts purchased from gift funds will be identified with suitable plates. Refer to the "Gifts and Donations Policy."

Requests for the establishment of specially endowed collections will be considered by the Board, in keeping with the philosophy of the library and the materials selection policy. It is further understood that such collections may be terminated at a future date if the Board determines they have outlived their usefulness or become too costly to maintain.

#### Access

The Library Board recognizes that full, confidential, and unrestricted access to information is essential in order for patrons to exercise their constitutional rights. Collections are organized, marked and maintained to facilitate, not restrict use. The use of rare and scholarly items, or items frequently subject to damage or theft, may be controlled to protect the materials for future library users. Materials which may be considered controversial will not be altered or labeled by the Library. Responsibility for a child's selection rests with the parent/guardian, not with the District.

#### Collection Maintenance

The Library keeps its collection vital and useful by retaining or replacing materials and systematically removing works that are worn, outdated, of little historical or artistic significance, or no longer in demand. Discard of materials is not intended to sanction removal of library materials based upon controversy

#### Collection Review

The Board recognizes the right of individuals to question materials in the library collection. The library will give serious consideration to each patron's opinion. Material under consideration will remain available to patrons until a decision is made.

### Self-Published Books by Local Authors

The Siuslaw Public Library welcomes the growing opportunities that self-publishing technologies offer local writers for self-expression.

Material will be considered for inclusion in the collection if it meets the following criteria:

- The author must be a resident of the Siuslaw Public Library District.
- The materials must be printed and bound in a manner suitable to withstand at least 20 readings/circulations.
- The donor must not have any expectation of influencing library policies, procedures, or practices.
- The content of the material must not include any obvious violations of State and/or Federal Law, including but not limited to copyright violations, plagiarism, defamation, obscenity or child pornography.

The Library District will:

- Create a brief record in the online catalog for the item showing author, title, page numbers, publication date and shelving location.
- Mark the items with a "Local Author" sticker.
- Materials will be integrated into the appropriate circulating collection.

***Adopted by Board of Directors: August 18, 1999***

***Revised by Board of Directors: June 19, 2002***

***Revised by Board of Directors: December 18, 2013***

***Revised by Board of Directors: May 15, 2019***

***Revised by Board of Directors: April 16, 2025***

## **American Library Association (ALA): Library Bill of Rights**

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019.

Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

## **ALA Freedom to Read Statement**

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is

essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. *It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. *There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon



other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

- 7. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

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This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.

*A Joint Statement by:*

American Library Association  
Association of American Publishers

*Subsequently endorsed by:*

American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression  
The Association of American University Presses, Inc.  
The Children's Book Council

Freedom to Read Foundation  
National Association of College Stores  
National Coalition Against Censorship  
National Council of Teachers of English  
The Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression

### **ALA Freedom to View Statement**

The **FREEDOM TO VIEW**, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the [First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States](#). In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore these principles are affirmed:

1. To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association (formerly the Educational Film Library Association) and was adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.

**Endorsed January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council**

## **Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors:** **An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights**

The American Library Association supports equal and equitable access to all library resources and services by users of all ages. Library policies and procedures that effectively deny minors equal and equitable access to all library resources and services available to other users is in violation of the American Library Association's *Library Bill of Rights*. The American Library Association opposes all attempts to restrict access to library services, materials, and facilities based on the age of library users.

Article V of the *Library Bill of Rights* states, "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views." The right to use a library includes free access to, and unrestricted use of, all the services, materials, and facilities the library has to offer. Every restriction on access to, and use of, library resources, based solely on the chronological age, apparent maturity, educational level, literacy skills, emancipatory or other legal status of users violates Article V. This includes minors who do not have a parent or guardian available to sign a library card application or permission slip. Unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness should be able to obtain a library card regardless of library policies related to chronological age.

School and public libraries are charged with the mission of providing services and resources to meet the diverse interests and informational needs of the communities they serve. Services, materials, and facilities that fulfill the needs and interests of library users at different stages in their personal development are a necessary part of providing library services and should be determined on an individual basis. Equitable access to all library resources and services should not be abridged based on chronological age, apparent maturity, educational level, literacy skills, legal status, or through restrictive scheduling and use policies.

Libraries should not limit the selection and development of library resources simply because minors will have access to them. A library's failure to acquire materials on the grounds that minors may be able to access those materials diminishes the credibility of the library in the community and restricts access for all library users.

Children and young adults unquestionably possess First Amendment rights, including the right to receive information through the library in print, sound, images, data, social media, online applications, games, technologies, programming, and other formats.<sup>1</sup> Constitutionally protected speech cannot be suppressed solely to protect children or young adults from ideas or images a legislative body believes to be unsuitable for them.<sup>2</sup> Libraries and their library

governing bodies should not resort to age restrictions in an effort to avoid actual or anticipated objections, because only a court of law can determine whether or not content is constitutionally protected.

Article VII of the [Library Bill of Rights](#) states, "All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use." This includes students and minors, who have a right to be free from any unreasonable intrusion into or surveillance of their lawful library use.<sup>3</sup>

The mission, goals, and objectives of libraries cannot authorize libraries and their governing bodies to assume, abrogate, or overrule the rights and responsibilities of parents and guardians. As "Libraries: An American Value" states, "We affirm the responsibility and the right of all parents and guardians to guide their own children's use of the library and its resources and services."<sup>4</sup> Libraries and their governing bodies cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child. Libraries and their governing bodies shall ensure that only parents and guardians have the right and the responsibility to determine their children's—and only their children's—access to library resources. Parents and guardians who do not want their children to have access to specific library services, materials, or facilities should so advise their own children. Libraries and library governing bodies should not use rating systems to inhibit a minor's access to materials.<sup>5</sup>

Libraries and their governing bodies have a legal and professional obligation to ensure that all members of the communities they serve have free and equitable access to a diverse range of library resources and services that is inclusive, regardless of content, approach, or format. This principle of library service applies equally to all users, minors as well as adults. Lack of access to information can be harmful to minors. Libraries and their governing bodies must uphold this principle in order to provide adequate and effective service to minors.

<sup>1</sup> [Brown v. Entertainment Merchant's Association, et al.](#) 564 U.S. 08-1448 (2011).

<sup>2</sup> [Erznoznik v. City of Jacksonville](#), 422 U.S. 205 (1975): "Speech that is neither obscene as to youths nor subject to some other legitimate proscription cannot be suppressed solely to protect the young from ideas or images that a legislative body thinks unsuitable for them. In most circumstances, the values protected by the First Amendment are no less applicable when government seeks to control the flow of information to minors." See also [Tinker v. Des Moines School Dist.](#), 393 U.S.503 (1969); [West Virginia Bd. of Ed. v. Barnette](#), 319 U.S. 624 (1943); [AAMA v. Kendrick](#), 244 F.3d 572 (7th Cir. 2001).

<sup>3</sup> "[Privacy: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights](#)," adopted June 19, 2002, by the ALA Council; amended July 1, 2014; and June 24, 2019.

<sup>4</sup> "[Libraries: An American Value](#)," adopted on February 3, 1999, by ALA Council.

<sup>5</sup> "[Rating Systems: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights](#)," adopted on June 30, 2015, by ALA Council; amended June 25, 2019.

Adopted June 30, 1972, by the ALA Council; amended July 1, 1981; July 3, 1991; June 30, 2004; July 2, 2008 *under previous name* "Free Access to Libraries for Minors"; July 1, 2014; and June 25, 2019.