

# Suffern Free Library - Collection Development

*Approved by Regional Library Board on May 24, 2022*

*This policy supersedes all prior policies and practices relative to this subject.*

Suffern Free Library (SFL) acquires and makes available materials that inform, educate, and entertain and enrich individuals within our community. To serve the diverse needs of library users, SFL is committed to collecting and offering access to a variety of print, media and electronic resources. The criteria for selection, acquisition, and withdrawal of materials are similar for all formats and areas of the collection.

The Collection Development policy establishes principles and policies to assist the library staff in selecting materials of contemporary interest or permanent value. This document also provides a source of information for public inquiries concerning the process of materials selection and the composition and maintenance of the collections. The Library Director is responsible for implementing this policy.

Other community resources and area library resources are taken into consideration when developing collections. Through interlibrary loan, librarians may obtain materials from other sources. The Library supports the individual's right to access ideas and information representing all points of view. To this end, the Library welcomes and solicits patron suggestions, comments and ideas about the collection and its development. The Suffern Free Library conforms to the ideology expressed in the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, The Freedom to Read Statement and Freedom to View Statement.

## **Freedom of Access to Information**

Public libraries are places where people of all ages and all points of view can find information on issues of importance and of interest to themselves. Parents and guardians are responsible for monitoring and guiding their child's exposure to and use of materials, including online resources and the Internet. Library staff do not serve in place of parents (*in loco parentis*).

## **Materials Selection**

The SFL Board of Trustees delegates the authority and responsibility for the selection of library materials to the Library Director and, under his/her direction, to the library staff.

Materials are considered in light of budget and space constraints, and the following selection or acceptance criteria:

- Accuracy and timeliness
- Attention of the media and/or experts in the field
- Availability of materials elsewhere in the community or via Interlibrary Loan
- Clarity, readability, visual appeal, quality of production or ease of use
- Contemporary or cultural significance
- Contribution to the diversity and scope of the existing collection
- Current and anticipated needs and interests of a continuously growing and changing community
- Materials of long-lasting popularity or importance
- Price and budget considerations

- Receipt of nominations for recognized awards, prizes and notable lists
- Relevance to the needs and interests of the community
- Reputation/significance of the author, illustrator, editor, publisher, producer, or performer
- Reviews and evaluation by critics and reviewers
- Suitability of subject, style, and format for intended audience and library use
- Works of regional interest or works by local authors, artists, publishers or producers

The above selection criteria are not listed in order of importance, and the number and weight of applicable criteria may vary in a decision. Selection of a given item for the library's collections should not be interpreted as an endorsement of a particular point of view.

### **Material Format**

Material is purchased in the most appropriate format for Library use. Books are generally purchased in hardcover editions for durability. However, paperback editions may be purchased in cases where the hardcover edition is expensive and the title would be either used infrequently or is an item that would be weeded from the collection in a few years. Paperbacks are often purchased as added copies of popular titles to meet patron demand and as part of the paperback browsing collection.

Textbooks are purchased only in areas where there is little or no material in any other format. The Library does not buy the textbooks used by the local schools as it is the responsibility of the School Library to provide copies of these. The Library does provide reading material for summer reading requirements of the local schools.

Videos purchased for the Library include popular films, classical films, instructional films, documentaries, travelogues and children's stories, etc.

New formats will be considered for the collection when it becomes apparent that a significant portion of the population has the necessary technology to make use of the format.

### **New and Emerging Formats**

Technologies of sound, image, and electronic delivery of information continue to evolve, and SFL will monitor and evaluate new formats, implementing them when appropriate.

### **Rare and Expensive Books**

The Library believes that materials selected for the circulation collection should be judged on merit and value to the collection, rather than the cost of an item. Rare books that have been donated to the Library may be sold and the money received used to purchase materials for circulation. The Library will not establish a Rare Book Room.

### ***Gifts – refer to Gift Policy***

## **Materials Deselection**

The Library provides collections that are current, in good condition, well-used, and relevant to the needs and interests of the community. To maintain the collections, materials are evaluated on a systematic and continuing basis. Damaged, unattractive, outdated and unused materials are subject to withdrawal and then may be discarded, repurposed, or sold at public sale.

The Library incorporates the CREW method, which stands for **Continuous Review, Evaluation, and Weeding**.

General criteria used in evaluating whether an item should be removed from the collection include:

- Accuracy
- Current or potential use
- Obsolescence
- Physical condition
- Completeness of sets
- Reference value
- Availability of similar materials
- Local community needs

## **Reconsideration of Library Materials**

Suffern Free Library provides a formal review process to enable patrons to communicate their comments concerning materials. Members of the professional staff will respond to inquiries. Individuals may state their opinion in writing on a form supplied by SFL. Upon conferring with an internal material review committee, SFL administration will send a response within one month of receiving the form.

If further consideration is requested, the matter will be referred by the Library Director to the SFL Board of Trustees, who make the final determination. Material under question will remain active in the collection during the review process. The SFL Board of Trustees retains responsibility for the final decision in requests for reconsideration.

### **Related items:**

Materials Reconsideration Request Procedure  
Reconsideration Request Form

## **Suffern Free Library Materials Reconsideration Request Procedure**

The Suffern Free Library serves as an information hub for the residents of the Suffern Central School District. It is the public library's responsibility to reflect within its collection differing points of view. The Suffern Free Library recognizes that some materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons.

To ensure that the interests and information needs of the residents of the Suffern Central School District are adequately met by the collection, the Suffern Free Library welcomes expression of opinion and will review requests for reconsideration of Library materials by Suffern Free Library cardholders.

### **Regulations:**

- The Suffern Free Library conforms to the ideology expressed in the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, The Freedom to Read Statement and Freedom to View Statement.
- The responsibility for reading and the use of the library by children rests with their parents or legal guardians. At no time will library staff act *in loco parentis*. Selection of library materials will not be inhibited by the possibility that they may come into the possession of children.
- Staff will send all in-person, phone or email inquiries regarding reconsideration of library materials to the Reference or Children's Department Heads or the Library Director.
- If a Suffern Free Library cardholder wishes to express concern about the suitability or classification of a particular item, the User must complete a "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" form available at the Adult and Children's Information Desk.
- All "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" forms will be forwarded to the Library Director, to be reviewed at the following Library Board of Trustees meeting.
- The Library Board of Trustees will review the request and make a decision.
- During the reconsideration process, all items in question will remain in the collection.
- The User will receive a letter from the Board of Trustees regarding their final decision.
- The Library Director has the ultimate say on whether or not an item has been properly classified.