

BETHEL PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY

POLICY NUMBER: 101

TITLE: Collection Development Policy

DATE ISSUED: 7/10/2008; Revised 7/2017; May 2022; November 2025

BETHEL PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY (BPPL) acquires, organizes, and provides open access to information, resources and services that inspire and help community residents meet their lifelong personal, educational, cultural, vocational, and recreational information needs.

The library recognizes the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement adopted by the American Library Association (Appendices A & B).

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This collection development policy defines the standards and outlines the responsibility for materials selection for BPPL. Within these guidelines, the Director or staff that he/she designates will use their professional judgment to determine the materials which best meet the objectives of the library as a place to explore, learn, create and connect and to meet the needs of its patrons.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT

BPPL is dedicated to curating equitable and accessible collections in service of our community. The Library acknowledges long-standing systemic biases and structural inequities that have shaped how information is created, disseminated, organized, and accessed, as well as the role libraries have unintentionally played in upholding these systems. To dismantle these structures, we strive to build intentional collections that recognize, value, and embrace the diverse experiences and multiple identities within our community. These identities and experiences include, but are not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender identity, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, ability, culture, language, geographic origin, level of education, religion, age, and size. By purposefully developing diverse, equitable, and inclusive collections, we aspire to foster a community who engage in critical inquiry and social justice that reflects their own backgrounds and the backgrounds of others.

COLLECTION PRIORITIES

The following collection development priorities have been determined for all material formats:

- Fiction
- Audio-visual (video, recorded books, recorded music)
- Non-fiction (including materials for curriculum support)
- E-Resources
- Online databases
- Periodicals
- Reference (including materials for curriculum support)

MATERIALS NOT COLLECTED

- Textbooks
- Rare books
- Computer software

SELECTION CRITERIA

BPPL selects material for its collection in accordance with professionally accepted guidelines. The library will attempt to represent all approaches to public issues of a controversial nature. The library does not sanction particular beliefs or views, nor is the selection of any given item equivalent to an endorsement of the author's viewpoint.

The selection of materials is governed by the library's mission statement, its assessment of the present and future needs of the community, its recognition of and cooperation with neighboring libraries accessible to residents, and the limitations of space and budget.

Fiction Criteria. The library aims to provide a variety of types of fiction to satisfy readers of differing tastes, interests, and reading skills. There is no single standard by which to judge fiction, however, the following criteria will be considered:

- Popular demand
- Reputation of the author and/or publisher
- Literary merit
- Physical qualities of the item (binding, paper, etc.)
- Cost
- Part of an existing series

Videos. The goal of the library is to provide a collection of feature, instructional, educational, and literature-based videos that will enhance the library's collection. The following selection criteria will be considered:

- Popular demand
- Appropriateness to the interests and skills of the intended users
- Artistic merit and reputation of the performers
- Technical quality (clarity of picture and sound quality)
- Cost

Audio Books. The library seeks to provide a collection of recorded instructional, educational and quality literature that parallels most areas of the general collection. Efforts are made to select a variety of topics and to appeal to a range of interests. The following criteria will be considered:

- Popular demand
- Availability of unabridged version
- Authority and competency of producer
- Artistic merit and reputation of the reader
- Technical quality (sound)
- Cost

Recorded Music. The library seeks to provide a collection of music of enduring popularity. The following criteria will be taken into account when selecting recordings:

- Popular demand
- Artistic merit
- Authority and competency of producer
- Technical quality (sound)
- Cost

Non-fiction Criteria. The library acquires materials of permanent and current interests in all subjects based upon the individual's right and duty to make decisions for him/herself. Each item is evaluated in its entirety and not on the basis of a particular section. The following general criteria will be considered when selecting materials:

- Popular demand
- Authoritativeness of the writer and reputation of the publisher
- Accuracy of information
- Appropriateness and relevancy of subject to library users
- Physical qualities of the item (binding, paper, etc.)
- Publication date
- Cost

e-Resources. Selection of electronic resources carries all of the same considerations of print books and audio-visual materials. Additional issues at play in this new and still volatile area of publishing include:

- **Digital Rights Management**
While print books are, clearly, owned outright by the library following purchase, e-book titles often carry new limitations on what we think of as "ownership". These may include page limits on printing or copying, non-transfer of interlibrary loan rights, and, sometimes, even restrictions on the number of uses before re-purchase is required.
- **Cost**
E-books may be priced higher than their print counterparts.
- **Preservation**
Technology providing long-term preservation of e-resource content occurs only in cases where the publisher chooses to make the commitment to participate in these community-based preservation initiatives.

Periodicals. Periodicals are publications issued and received on a regular basis. They are intended to complement the book collection. The library does not subscribe to highly specialized or technical periodicals or to professional journals other than those in the field of library science. Periodicals are selected according to the following criteria:

- Indexed in one of the standard indexing resources (*Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature*)
- *Magazines for Libraries* by Bowker
- Cost

- Popular demand
- Whether the periodical has local or regional interest

Reference. Reference materials are those designed by the arrangement and treatment of their subject matter to be consulted for definite items of information rather than to be read consecutively. Since they are typically used frequently by the public and library staff to answer specific questions, they are designated for use within the library. The following criteria will be considered in acquiring materials for the reference collection:

- Usefulness of the publication in relation to the existing collection
- Authoritativeness of the author(s) and reputation of the publisher
- Accuracy of information
- Currency of the topic
- Cost

SELECTION PROCESS

Responsibility for Selection. The Board of Trustees approves the Collection Development policy for the BPPL. The responsibility for administering this policy rests with the Director.

Community Participation. Involvement by the community in the selection process is encouraged and can be achieved through the following mechanisms:

- *Reserve requests* – the general public may reserve currently checked out circulating materials. The library may consider adding duplicate copies to satisfy the expressed demand.
- *Purchase suggestions* – Library users are encouraged to suggest titles and/or subjects that they would like to see in the collection. Suggestions can be made to any staff member. In such cases, the stated selection criteria will be taken into account.
- *Statement of Concern Regarding Library Materials* – There may be occasions when a member of the community may be concerned about a particular item in the library's collection. If a patron wishes the library to reconsider material that is in the collection, a form (Appendix C) is available from the circulation desk. This form must be completed in its entirety and returned to a library staff member. Once the form is received, the Director will review the request, the item's place in the collection, and reasons for including the item in the collection. The Director will then contact the patron. A copy of the letter will be filed and the Board of Trustees will be informed.

If the patron is not satisfied at this level, he/she will be invited to attend the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees. The Board, after hearing the complaint and considering the material, will notify the patron in writing of the Board's decision. Final authority rests with the Library Board of Trustees.

Selection Tools. Professional staff members are expected to read current library and review journals in order to suggest materials for purchase. These journals include Library Journal, Booklist, and School Library Journal, among others. In addition,

librarians should be aware of materials that are being reviewed in other sources, such as major national newspaper, local publications, and the weekly newsmagazines, as well as broadcast media.

MATERIAL FORMATS

Although the majority of the library's collection is offered in the traditional print format, valuable information is also available in audio-visual and electronic formats. Materials will be selected and purchased in the most appropriate format for library use, including but not limited to:

- Hardcover books
- Paperback books (trade and mass market)
- Serials/periodicals
- Video (DVD)
- Compact Discs
- Large Type Books
- Electronic (on-line databases, digital books, audiobooks, video)

GIFT/DONATED MATERIALS

Materials donated to the library must meet the same standards as other materials for inclusion in the library's collection. If a donated item is not added to the collection of BPPL, it may be given to another library, placed in the library's book sale or discarded. The revenue from any item sold will be used to benefit the library. All gifts are accepted with the understanding that someday it may be necessary to deselect the item(s). The library cannot commit to perpetually housing a donation.

Criteria. The library accepts donations that meet the following criteria:

- Fiction and non-fiction titles that are less than three (3) years old
- Children's titles
- Audio-visual materials in good condition

The library cannot accept items that are:

- Marked
- Yellowed
- Brittle
- Infected
- Musty
- Damaged
- Duplicates of an item which the library already has a sufficient number
- Outdated items
- Condensed/abridged titles
- Textbooks

Celebration and Memorial Gifts: The library welcomes monetary contributions specifically for material purchases in celebration or memorial of named individuals. Materials selected as memorials must meet the same standards as other materials selected

for inclusion in the library's collection. Other options include non-traditional items such as artwork or furniture. In order to properly honor the generosity, a special form (Appendix D) to record the information is used and should be completed by the donor. The library cannot commit to perpetually housing a memorial or gift item.

DESELECTION AND REPLACEMENT OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

Deselection. Deselection of library materials, or weeding, is an integral part of collection development. Materials are withdrawn from the library's collection through systematic weeding or because of loss or physical damage. The following categories of materials will be considered for deselection:

- Worn or mutilated items
- Duplicate copies of seldom used titles
- Materials which contain outdated or inaccurate information
- Superseded editions of specific titles
- Materials no longer of interest or demand

Replacement. While the library attempts to maintain copies of standard and important works, it does not automatically replace all materials withdrawn due to loss or physical damage. Decisions concerning the replacement of individual items are based on the following considerations:

- Demand for the item
- Number of copies held
- Existing coverage of the subject within the collection
- Accuracy of its contents
- Availability of title for reorder
- Cost of mending versus cost of replacement
- Availability of title from other libraries in Allegheny County

APPENDICES

- A. Library Bill of Rights*
- B. Freedom to Read Statement*
- C. Statement of Concern Regarding Library Materials Form*
- D. Memorial/Honor Book Information Form*

APPENDIX A

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.

Adopted June 18, 1948.
Amended February 2, 1961, and January 23, 1980,
inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996,
by the ALA Council.

APPENDIX B

The Freedom to Read Statement

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.
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.
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.
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.
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.
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.
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.

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

APPENDIX C

BETHEL PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY STATEMENT OF CONCERN REGARDING LIBRARY MATERIAL(S)

Author _____

Title _____

Publisher _____

Request Initiated by _____

Address _____ Phone _____

City _____ Zip _____

Request represents _____ Individual

_____ Organization or Group

Organization or group name _____

1. Have you read or viewed the entire work? YES NO

1a. If not, what parts have you read/viewed?

2. To what material do you object? (Please be specific; cite pages or sections)

3. What good or valuable features do you find in the material?

4. What do you believe is the theme of the material?

5. What do you feel might be the result of reading or viewing this material?

6. Have you read any reviews of this material? YES NO

6a. If so, please specify:

7. Do you think this material would be more appropriate for a different age group?
Please explain.

8. What would you like the library to do about this material?

9. Can you recommend other material that would convey as valuable a picture and/or
perspective of the subject treated? If yes, please specify: YES NO

Signature

Date

Action taken:

Director's Signature

Date

BETHEL PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY
5100 W. Library Avenue
Bethel Park, PA 15102
412-835-2207

APPENDIX D



Celebration Book Program Form

Please fill out the information below and send this form along with your donation.

All donations will be listed on the [Bethel Park Public Library Book Dedication and Memorials Blog](#) and we will send an acknowledgment to thank you.

Make checks payable to Bethel Park Public Library and mail them to:

Gift Book Program
Bethel Park Public Library
5100 W. Library Avenue
Bethel Park, PA 15102

Donor Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

A donation of \$35 or more includes a personalized bookplate that will be placed inside an item selected by the library. Please fill out the information below exactly as you would like it to appear on the bookplate.

Book Plate Information

In Celebration of: _____

Presented by: _____

Please Notify:

Name _____

Address _____

Suggested Subject or Title: _____



Memorial Book Program Form

Please fill out the information below and send this form along with your donation.

All donations will be listed on the [Bethel Park Public Library Book Dedication and Memorials Blog](#) and we will send an acknowledgment to thank you.

Make checks payable to Bethel Park Public Library and mail them to:

Gift Book Program
Bethel Park Public Library
5100 W. Library Avenue
Bethel Park, PA 15102

Donor Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

A donation of \$35 or more includes a personalized bookplate that will be placed inside an item selected by the library. Please fill out the information below exactly as you would like it to appear on the bookplate.

Book Plate Information

In Memory of: _____

Presented by: _____

Please Notify:

Name _____

Address _____

Suggested Subject or Title: _____
