



Collection Development Policy

Bloomfield Public Library (BPL) values the right of every citizen to have equal opportunity to achieve personal success. We are committed to leading with empathy and improving the quality of life in our community, with a focus on access to lifelong learning in reading, writing, early and basic literacy, finance, health, social justice, and cultural competency. To that end, materials are selected, maintained, and deselected with this philosophy in mind. Our [Strategic Plan](#), along with our [Social Justice Mission Statement](#), guides us in this important work.

BPL represents a broad and diverse demographic. With a public that includes all ages, from infants to the elderly, selection criteria take into account the various interests and needs of the patrons we serve. Our collections contain a wide variety of material formats, including print, audio-visual, and electronic, in all three of our locations: Prosser, McMahon Wintonbury, and BPL Online. In selecting materials and developing collections for children, teens, and adults, library staff includes materials that represent the broad range of human experience, reflecting the ethnic, religious, racial, and socio-economic diversity not only of Bloomfield, but also the larger global perspective. Library collections provide a broad range of perspectives on current and historical issues. The primary languages of our materials are English, with materials in other languages actively under expansion in response to community needs.

In building our collections, library staff is guided by the principle of selection, rather than censorship. Works are not excluded or included in the collection based solely on the subject matter or on political, religious, or ideological grounds. (See [Intellectual Freedom and Censorship Policy](#).) Criteria such as: present and potential relevance to community needs, suitability of subject and style for the intended audience, favorable attention by critics and reviewers, relation to the existing collection and to other materials on the subject, and requests by library patrons, are considered in selecting materials for all collections.

BPL staff contribute to the development of patron-oriented collections by: engaging in open, continuous two-way communication with library patrons and recognizing that individuals have different ways of expressing their needs based on age, language, economic status, culture, and/or other characteristics; interacting with patrons with understanding, respect, and responsiveness; handling all requests equitably and with empathy; working in partnership with one another to understand and respond to community needs; understanding and responding to rapidly changing demographics, as well as societal and technological changes; recognizing that materials of varying



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complexities and formats are necessary to satisfy the diverse needs of library users; balancing individual needs and broader community needs in determining the best allocation of collection budget for acquiring or providing access to materials and information; seeking continuous improvement through ongoing measurement; and reviewing the collection on a regular basis to identify areas of community interest that may need to be strengthened.

We strive to ensure that our collections represent a diversity of viewpoints on all topics, including those that may be considered controversial. Collection development and cataloging are conducted according to professional standards and established procedures. Developing our diverse collection requires such criteria as selecting content in multiple formats; considering resources from self-published, independent, small, and local producers; seeking content created by and representative of marginalized and underrepresented groups; evaluating how diverse collection resources are cataloged, labeled, and displayed; including content in languages used in the community that the library serves, when possible; and providing resources in formats that meet the needs of users with disabilities.

The responsibility for the overall selection and maintenance of all materials and formats within the collection of the library is undertaken by a team of staff members as a result of their education, training, experience, and job classification. All materials and formats are selected or approved for the library's collection by staff members who are qualified to do so, including the director. When we are unable to obtain a particular item or its content in any format at our library, we use resource sharing such as interlibrary loan for our public.

BPL continually withdraws items from the collection, basing its decisions on a number of factors, including condition, publishing date, frequency of circulation, community interest, and availability of newer or more valid materials. Items dealing with local history are an exception, as are certain classics, poetry, folklore, and award-winning children's books. Materials that are no longer in demand are withdrawn from the collection and are often donated to the Friends of the Library and other local organizations.

Accepting gifts and donations is an important way for our public to benefit from the generosity of the community it serves. Gifts and donations of materials are reviewed using the same criteria as purchases. BPL determines how to best incorporate such



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materials into the existing collections. Materials not added to library collections may be used for programs or given to other local organizations such as schools, daycares, senior centers, or Friends of the Library groups.

Donations received by the library that are not added to the library's collection are forwarded to the Friends of the Library for their future sales. The proceeds from these sales directly benefit BPL in a fashion consistent with accepted library policies and services as determined by the Board of Trustees.

Funds may be given for the purpose of acquiring materials recommended by library staff as prescribed in this policy, or for the purchase of specific items suggested by the donor. When the library receives a cash gift for the purchase of materials, the library staff makes the selection with the general selection principles set forth in this policy.

Policy adapted from The American Library Association

Related documents:

[BPL Strategic Plan](#)

[Social Justice Mission Statement](#)

[Intellectual Freedom and Censorship Policy](#)

[Request for Reconsideration of Material Form](#)

[Bloomfield History Collection Management Policy](#)