

Materials Selection Policy  
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## **Policy**

The Materials Selection Policy serves as a guide for the library staff in their selection decisions, and it informs the general public of the library's criteria for material selection.

The Oelwein Public Library offers collections to further the library's mission. The primary objective of the library is to serve the needs of the community. Because the library serves a wide variety of people with a wide range of experience and education, the library's objectives must be diversified enough to encompass a variety of needs, tastes, and opinions.

## **Responsibility for Selection**

The selection of books and materials is the responsibility of the Director and those staff designated by the director as collection managers.

## **Selection Guidelines and Practices**

As the foundation of its materials selection policy, the Board of Trustees adopts the Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read Statement, and the Freedom to View Statement of the American Library Association which is included in the policy manual.

The policy of the Oelwein Library is to provide, as far as possible, the materials which will meet the needs of the community, but it does not attempt to develop an exhaustive research collection in all fields of study. In case of requests for material not available at the Oelwein Library, an attempt will be made to borrow this material on inter-library loan.

The Oelwein Library attempts to supply a significant amount of recreational materials for all ages. The Library is aware of the needs of students, but it is not the primary responsibility of the Oelwein Library to provide curriculum centered materials for them.

## **Selection Aids**

The Director and collection managers select materials by applying statistical data and their knowledge of patron information needs. Professional selection guides used may include but are not limited to *Library Journal*, *Booklist*, *Publisher's Weekly*, *Wilson Library Catalog for Small Public Libraries*, reviews in magazines and newspapers, websites, and award winning lists.

Oelwein Public Library patrons are encouraged to recommend purchase of library materials. These requests are evaluated using the selection criteria. "Request Forms" are available at public service desks and the catalog stations. Also, patrons may send an email request through our "Ask a Librarian" service on the library's website or through their account on the online catalog.

## **Criteria**

All acquisitions, whether purchased or donated, are considered in terms of the standards listed below. However, an item need not meet all of the criteria in order to be acceptable. Materials are evaluated on the significance of the entire work rather than individual parts. When judging the quality of materials, several standards and combinations of standards may be used. The addition of a book or material in no way represents an endorsement of a theory, idea, or policy by the Board of Trustees or the staff. The following principals will guide selection:

- Contemporary significance or permanent value
- Community interest
- Accuracy of content
- Reputation and/or authority of the author, editor or illustrator
- Literary merit
- Relation to existing collection and to other materials on the subject maintaining a balance in the collection
- Price, availability, and demand
- Format and ease of use
- Scarcity of information in the subject area
- Availability of material in other area libraries
- Attention of critics, reviewers, media, and public

## **Gifts**

The Oelwein Library welcomes gifts of all types, including library materials, money, or real property. Gift books and materials will be evaluated and accepted, using the same criteria as that used in the selection policy of the library. The Oelwein Public Library will not accept any unpublished materials to be placed in the library collection.

## **Expressions of Concern**

Because of the rich diversity of human experience and opinion, it is inevitable that some materials in the library's collection will be objectionable to some people in the community. The library, however, in a very real sense, belongs to the whole community--to the minority as well as to the majority. It has a responsibility to serve the community in all its variety. That responsibility includes providing for needs and interests that may offend a few or even a great many people.

A sincere effort is made to provide a balanced collection. The library attempts to represent all sides of controversial issues. In no case does the library take an official stand on any public question. The function of the library is to provide information, not to advocate specific points of view. A patron who wishes to object to specific books or other library materials will be requested to complete the form, "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials," available from a staff member.

## **Collection Assessment**

Circulation collections undergo an annual assessment to make space for current materials, to make collections more attractive, to facilitate ease of use by patrons and staff, and to reduce the damage to materials caused by overcrowding, space limitations, and overuse. Assessment decisions are based on the following criteria:

- Currency
- Accuracy
- Use and vitality based on statistics
- Wear and damage
- Durability
- Changes in format
- Duplicated holdings with low demand
- Space limitations
- Community interest
- Availability from other libraries

The library uses the Crew Manual from the State Library of Iowa as its general system for withdrawing materials. Materials removed are given to the Friends of the Library for their annual book sale or disposed of in any way the Director and Library Board deem appropriate.