Material Selection Policy of the West Hempstead Public Library

The West Hempstead Public Library, as a community institution is dedicated to the concept of service to all the residents of the school district. A fundamental part of this service is the selection of appropriate materials which depends on five factors:

I. The objectives of the library.
II. The community.
III. Membership in a cooperative library system.
IV. The nature and quality of the material.
V. Budget and space constraints.

The purpose of this Materials Selection Policy in discussing these factors is to articulate the role of the library in the community, provide guidelines for the staff in their role as selectors and inform the public how materials are selected.

I. Objectives of the library

a) Meet the informational needs of the entire community
b) Supplement formal study and encourage informal education
c) Meet the recreational and entertainment needs of the entire community
d) Give access to a variety of opinions on matters of current interest in the affairs of the community, the country and the world
e) Supplement learning as it relates to improving job-related skills
f) Support educational and cultural activities within the community
g) Assist the individual to grow intellectually and spiritually in order to enjoy life more fully

Free and convenient access to the world of ideas and information is of vital importance. The West Hempstead Public Library, therefore, incorporates as part of this policy the Library Bill of Rights (Appendix A and B attached). Because the library's concern is with the communication of ideas and information, these statements are extended to include all material in any format.

Books have always been, and will continue to be a proper concern of the library, but great amounts of information are available in other forms. The library must

acquire these appropriate materials regardless of format and integrate them into its total service program.

II. The Community

a) The people. The West Hempstead Public Library serves a diverse population of 19,800 (2020 Census). West Hempstead is a stable suburban community. The library strives to serve the various groups in the community including senior citizens, young children, students (especially pre-K through 12), and the physically challenged.

b) Other community resources. Other libraries in the area where materials are available for public or professional use will affect the selection of materials in specialized subject areas. Although all materials in all fields will be evaluated for purchase, established special collections are considered the primary sources for professional needs. The purchase of specialized or expensive materials contained in collections like those at the Nassau Academy of Medicine, Nassau County Supreme Court Law Library or BOCES Nassau Educational Resource Center is generally avoided. West Hempstead fulfills the roles of an academic library in some limited instances. LILRC's *Research Learning Program* may be utilized by West Hempstead patrons to gain access to specialized collections.

c) Educational institutions. Cooperation with the entire educational community is a basic tenet of public library service. Responsibility for the provision of curriculum related materials belongs properly to the schools, but the public library will provide materials, which supplement and enrich the reference, research and recreational needs of student borrowers of all ages. Primary support is given to the elementary and secondary curriculum. Extensive duplication to meet assignment demands is neither feasible nor appropriate.

No attempts will be made to supply textbooks in use in the West Hempstead schools or local colleges, but no book will be excluded because it is a textbook if it may be deemed useful to the general public.

III. As a member of a cooperative library system.

a) As a member of the Nassau Library System, materials selection will be mediated by the specialized collections maintained by the central and co-central libraries. Special collections include but are not limited to materials in a foreign language, materials for the blind and sight-impaired, and government documents.

IV. The nature and quality of the material as factors in selection.

Expanding areas of knowledge, changing social values, technological advances and cultural and religious differences require flexibility, open mindedness and responsiveness in evaluation and selection for the library.

Each type of material must be considered in terms of its own kind of excellence and the audience for whom it is intended. There is no single standard, which can be applied in all cases when making an acquisition decision. Some materials may be judged primarily in terms of artistic merit, or scholarship; others selected to satisfy the recreational and entertainment needs of the community.

A small proportion of materials may be subject to heavy local demand. Items having such demand may or may not meet the general and specific criteria contained in this policy. In either case, the volume and nature of requests by the public will be given serious consideration.

To build collections of merit, materials will be considered according to objective guidelines. All acquisitions, whether purchased or donated, are considered in terms of the following standards.

General Criteria:

1 Suitability of physical form for library use.
2 Suitability of subjects and style for intended audience.
3 Appropriateness and effectiveness of medium to content.
4 Insight into human and social conditions.
5 Relation to existing collections and other materials on subject.
6 Reputation and/or significance of author.
7 Attention of critics; reviewers and public.

Specific criteria for the evaluation of works of information and opinion:

1 Authority.
2 Comprehensiveness and depth of treatment.
3 Objectivity.
4 Clarity, accuracy and logic of presentation.
5 Representation of a challenging, although extreme, point of view.

Specific criteria for the evaluation of works of imagination:

1 Sustained interest.
2 Effective characterization.
3 Authenticity of historical or social setting.
4 Vitality and originality.

Using the above criteria, materials are reviewed by the professional staff. The final responsibility for selection resides with the Director of the library.

Appendix A: Library Bill of Rights

(Adopted June 18, 1948; Amended February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019 by American Library Association Council.)

The following statement has been adopted as library policy:

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 by Board of Trustees- West Hempstead Public Library, June 1984.
Revised Library Bill of Rights Adopted by Board of Trustees, February 2022

Appendix B: The Freedom to Read

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.

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.

Revised Freedom to Read Statement Adopted by Board of Trustees, February 28, 2022