

As revised

September 2021

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MATERIALS EVALUATION AND SELECTION POLICY

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
CLEVELAND HEIGHTS-UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS
PUBLIC LIBRARY**

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I. INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Cleveland Heights – University Heights Libraries is to:

- Provide free access to services and facilities for all ages
- Maintain safe, welcoming spaces and digital environment
- Offer expert information and research assistance
- Maintain and lend outstanding and balanced collections and materials
- Focus on programs and services that transform people’s lives
- Deliver high quality outreach services where they are needed

Our Vision

The Cleveland Heights – University Heights Libraries are the progressive and adaptive center of the community, connecting people to each other, to their neighborhoods, and to the world.

We place great value in:

- *Service for All*
Ensure that our libraries remain free and accessible. Champion digital and print literacy, intellectual freedom, and privacy. Respond to the needs and wants of our customers by leading with a culture of acceptance, equity, inclusion, and respect for all.
- *Supporting Community Aspirations*
Cultivate and support programs that encourage safe and economically thriving neighborhoods. Foster a climate of innovation inside and outside our walls.
- *Responsible Stewardship*
Implement effective management practices that incorporate integrity, diversity, and ethics in the workplace. Share organizational decision making and responsibility. Communicate effectively internally and externally.

Library Governance

The appropriate selection of materials is central to carrying out this mission. This *Materials Selection and Evaluation Policy* guides staff in the acquisition of material that is of current interest and/or of lasting value to existing and potential library customers. This Policy is also intended to familiarize library users with the principles upon which selection decisions are made. Librarians have a professional responsibility to be inclusive in collection development by upholding the principles of intellectual freedom as stated by the American Library Association.

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The Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library provides library materials to meet the informational and recreational needs of the culturally and economically diverse communities it serves.

Essentially, the selection of library materials is a two-way process. Librarians encourage the users of the library, with their varying backgrounds, tastes and reading abilities, to indicate their interests and needs. Librarians also exercise judgment to anticipate and evaluate these interests and needs. Library staff have the final responsibility for selection of materials.

The library provides tools for reference and research as well as materials for informational and recreational use. Materials are selected not only on the basis of community interests and needs, but also on the basis of social significance, authoritativeness, timeliness, and literary quality, with regard given to the availability of library funds and space, and the specialized holdings of other libraries within Clevnet. Materials, as defined by the library, may consist of books, magazines, electronic resources, DVDs, and any format that can meet the community needs whether expressed or implied.

Relationship of branches

“The central collection of the system shall be maintained in the Lee Road Branch and shall include a strong reference resource for the community with a broad range of materials, both circulating and noncirculating...”^[2]

“Each of the library branches shall provide library service to their immediate neighborhoods and reflects that community’s interest...”^[3] by maintaining circulating and general reference collections.

The Library’s website, www.heightslibrary.org, will be the source of all electronic resources and the Clevnet catalog. Mobile devices will have access to an app for the catalog provided by Clevnet.

This Materials Evaluation and Selection Policy offers guidance for all who are responsible for selection and is the official policy of the library. It is subject to revision and change of emphasis.

II. RESPONSIBILITY TO THE COMMUNITY

The public library is unique among institutions as an unbiased repository for the recorded expression of thought. It must, therefore, accept responsibility for providing free access by the public to a variety of points of view; however, the addition of an item to the collection in no way represents an endorsement by the library of any theory, idea, or policy contained in it. The collection will strive to represent many sides of controversial issues as far as availability of materials, space and budget allow. Selection will be based upon criteria given throughout this policy statement. The race, religion, nationality, gender identity, sexual orientation or political

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views of an author; frank or coarse language; the controversial content of an item; or the endorsement or disapproval of an individual or group in the community will not cause an item to be automatically included or excluded.

The responsibility for determining a child's reading material rests entirely with their parents or legal guardians. Materials selection is not restricted by parental objection to content.

The library will review the selection of a specific item upon electronic submission of a "Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials," a copy of which is appended to this policy, and which is available on our website. This form, once submitted to the library, is considered a public document and, as such, is subject to Ohio's open records laws. The request will be reviewed by staff and submitted to the Library Director with a recommendation for action. This Materials Evaluation and Selection Policy will be used as a basis for the review. A letter will be sent promptly to the person or organization making the request for reconsideration. If necessary, the request will be reviewed by the Board of Library Trustees.

III. PRINCIPLES OF EVALUATION AND SELECTION

General Guidelines

The library is responsible for adhering to an annual budget for the selection, purchase, and upkeep of print and digital collections that are balanced, authoritative, and appealing to the community.

Limitations

Materials are selected to fill the interests of both actual and potential borrowers. The library, within financial and space limitations, provides general tools for reference and research, as well as informational and recreational reading, viewing and listening. In some cases, the most satisfactory service to a borrower is retrieval of material through CLEVNET^[4], via the interlibrary loan network or by referral to another system.

Local Focus.

The known interests of local groups are reflected in materials purchased for educational, vocational and recreational needs. Any suggestion for purchase from a customer also receives appropriate consideration using the criteria listed in this policy.

Evaluation of Individual Materials

The overall value of each item is the chief criterion of selection. All materials are judged by trained staff consulting recognized review sources with respect to:

- Community use or demand
- Value—literary, educational, informational or recreational

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- Authority, effectiveness and readability
- Relative importance of subject matter to the collection
- Timeliness and social significance
- Importance of the author in the field
- Qualities conducive to critical thought and understanding
- Relationship to other materials in the same subject field
- Comparative scarcity of published material on the subject
- Cost or availability elsewhere
- Suitability of format for library purposes

Materials presenting a variety of points of view concerning the problems and issues of our times, international, national and local, shall be provided, if available, and shall not be excluded from library shelves because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval. The race, nationality, origin, background, gender identity, sexual orientation or the social, political or religious views of the writer or producer do not prohibit inclusion.

Works may be included despite coarse language or frankness. Materials are selected on the basis of the work as a whole and are not excluded because of isolated passages.

Materials representing many points of view on controversial subjects, when available, are considered for inclusion in the library, recognizing that those that offend, shock, or bore one person may be considered meaningful or significant to another.

Multiple copies of currently popular materials are purchased to meet customer demand.

Gifts

As a general policy the library welcomes gifts for the collection, reserving the right to dispose of those that cannot be used. Gifts of large collections that fall into subject categories not previously developed by the library will receive careful study. The implications of cost, maintenance, shelf space and growth must be considered before acceptance. Gifts of material sponsored by commercial and special interest groups will be evaluated to see that they conform to general selection policies.

Weeding and Discarding

A continuous re-evaluation of all library materials is essential in order to assure currency of factual information. Withdrawal of outdated material, materials no longer in use and duplicate and worn copies is ongoing. Popularity, community interest and availability of newer and more valid material are considerations. Material that contains racist, sexist or other harmful terminology or views, may be weeded, especially from Children's collections. Like most public libraries, the library subscribes to the Continuous Review, Evaluation and Weeding method also known as CREW.

Duplication

Heavy demand for a popular title is sufficient reason for considering duplication, depending upon the material's importance or popularity and budgetary constraints. The library may purchase materials to supplement reading assignments of local schools. However, the library is unable to purchase materials in sufficient quantities to meet all of the demand. Materials, including textbooks, may be purchased to support special after-school programs designed to give homework help to children and teens.

Replacement

Titles withdrawn because of condition, loss, or damage are considered for replacement, using original selection guidelines.

Collection Size

It is recognized that collection size is not an indication of the quality of a collection, and space limitations in all branches is a factor that must be considered.

Selection for Adults

Fiction

The library attempts to satisfy readers by choosing both notable and popular novels in all categories of fiction writing. Novels representing the major types and trends in writing are added to the collection.

Non-fiction

The library has a balanced, up-to-date circulating collection of authoritative, well-recognized books in multiple fields for the general reader. However, the limitation of funds prevents any attempt to provide a complete collection in any one field.

Reference

The library maintains a collection of up-to-date, non-circulating, print and virtual reference materials which, by virtue of their content and treatment, are consulted for definite items of information rather than for consecutive reading. Limitation of funds precludes a comprehensive collection and, when patrons require in-depth research, they may be referred to the specialized collections available at other libraries in the area. The library supports small businesses and investment through electronic databases and some print sources as funds allow.

Literacy Materials

In support of community agencies and tutoring programs, the library maintains a collection of materials that are appropriate for teaching adult literacy.

Selection for Teens

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A collection representing the recreational and informational needs and interests of teens, ages 13-18, including advanced juvenile titles and appropriate adult titles, will be provided. Curriculum-related, reference, and in-depth subject materials are maintained in the general collection for use by students of all ages and of diverse backgrounds.

The same criteria listed for selection of adult materials apply to teen materials. The content, style, format, and appeal to teens are taken into consideration.

The Teen collection consists of fiction, nonfiction, graphic novels/nonfiction, manga, e-media, digital formats, magazines, and audiobooks. Special interest collections within the Teen area include African-American Teen Fiction, Jewish Teen Fiction, Test Prep, and College and Career readiness reference sources.

The collection also includes adult materials about teen literature, parenting, and library service to teens.

Selection for Children

Books for children are selected to serve the needs of people ages 0-12 of diverse backgrounds, tastes and interests. The same criteria listed for selection of adult materials apply to children's materials, with the addition of a few special factors:

- Suitability of content, style, and format to age of reader
- Emphasis on fiction that entertains, stimulates the imagination, develops reading ability and enables children to explore the world around them
- Emphasis on non-fiction that displays careful organization and presentation, encourages analytical thinking, has an absence of stereotyping and racist imagery, and distinguishes carefully between fact and opinion
- Artistic merit in illustrated books

The collection also includes adult materials about children's literature, parenting, child development and library service to children.

Specific Policies of Selection for Materials in Varied Formats

Periodicals and Newspapers

The Library subscribes to periodicals to meet both informational and recreational needs of adults, teens, and children. Periodical titles shall be reviewed annually to ensure maximum usefulness to the public, taking into consideration the year's budget and the following criteria:

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- Community interest especially as recreational reading in a popular format
- Supplement to the book collection
- Availability in electronic format
- Availability at other libraries in the area
- Value as a reference source
- Recommendations from professional sources such as *Magazines for Public Libraries*, *Library Journal*, etc.
- Price

Space and budget considerations preclude the addition of specialized journals to the collection. Online availability of full-text versions of magazine backfiles represents the library's major resource for information supplementing that found in books. Because they are often not easily available online, some permanent files of older magazine or newspaper titles may, because of their historical value, be retained on microform or bound.

The library subscribes to selected local, national and international newspapers for news, current affairs and business information. Many can be found in electronic library databases. Limited backfiles of paper copies of the most frequently consulted papers will be maintained, along with more extensive microform backfiles of selected local newspapers.

Foreign Language Materials

Materials on learning languages are added to the collection. The library's collection of foreign language materials is supplemented on a regular basis by collections borrowed from ~~the Foreign Language~~ International Languages Department of the Cleveland Public Library. Consideration is given to the needs of those for whom English is a second language.

Special Interests

Consideration is given to the language, information, and format needs of people such as the people with vision impairments, blind people, and deaf and hard of hearing people, people with dementia, and people on the autism spectrum. Toys and puppets are added to the collection for young children. Playground equipment and video games, computer devices and internet hotspots are also available.

Government Publications

Government documents are selected on the same basis as books and other library materials. Federal, state and local documents are selected as available and as needed. Government depository collections are housed at the Cleveland Public Library and several local universities.

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Multiple formats.

The library provides media in a variety of formats for both learning and entertainment. Based on both actual and anticipated demand as well as the suitability of formats, the library purchases, within budgetary limitations, items and access to digital content. The majority of electronic resources are obtained through the library's membership in the Clevnet consortium. Additional electronic databases are obtained based on customer demand, as funds allow.

While the same general selection criteria are used for media in many formats, there is an added emphasis on meeting the needs of people with disabilities as provided for by the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Library also recognizes that people learn in a variety of ways and that for better comprehension, auditory or visual content are, for many, more appropriate than text.

Special Collections

Deaf Collection

Materials are selected for the Deaf Community of greater Cleveland and persons involved with that community for its support and entertainment. The collection, housed at the Coventry Village Branch, also includes materials for students of American Sign Language (ASL), interpreters, and linguistic researchers, relatives of deaf individuals and materials about deaf history and culture.

Miniature Score Collection

The primary focus of the collection is to complement the music/works being performed by the Cleveland Orchestra each concert year.

Local Authors The Coventry Village Branch holds a collection of works by local authors. This collection is constantly being developed. When local authors submit their works for consideration, a team of reviewers with knowledge of the material type (adult fiction, adult non-fiction, teen materials, children's materials) reads and evaluates the item. The reviewers consider the overall quality of the writing and/or illustration, the coherence of the work as a whole, and its possible interest to people in the community.

IV. SOURCES

This revision of the Materials Evaluation and Selection Policy was prepared by the library staff and reviewed by the **Operations Committee and the Planning and External Relations Committee of the Board of Library Trustees**. The Library subscribes to the principles stated in

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the latest revisions of the American Library Association's Freedom to Read and Freedom to View statements; the Library Bill of Rights.

All of these documents may be found on the ALA Website. <http://www.ala.org>

- A. Freedom to Read Statement
- B. Freedom to View Statement
- C. Library Bill of Rights and the following Interpretations:
 - 1. Access for Children and Teens to Nonprint Materials
 - 2. Challenged Materials
 - 3. Free Access to Libraries for Minors
 - 4. Labels and Rating Systems
 - 5. Restricted Access to Library Materials
 - 6. Access to Digital Information, Services and Networks
 - 7. Questions and Answers: Access to Digital Information, Services and Networks
 - 8. Access to Library Resources and Services Regardless of Gender or Sexual Orientation
 - 9. Diversity in Collection Development
 - 10. Evaluating Library Collections
 - 11. Expurgation of Library Materials
 - 12. Universal Right to Free Expression
 - 13. Economic Barriers to Information Access
 - 14. Privacy
 - 15. Questions and Answers on Privacy and Confidentiality
 - 16. Policy Concerning Confidentiality of Personally Identifiable Information About Library Users
 - 17. Policy on Confidentiality of Library Records
 - 18. Exhibit Spaces and Bulletin Boards

CREW: A Weeding Manual for Modern Libraries: Revised and Updated, Larson, Jeanette, Austin, TX: Texas State Library and Archives Commission, 2012 was also consulted. It may be found online at www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/pubs/crew/index.html

D. Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Library Material (Attached below)

Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Library Material

This form is found on the Library website. <https://heightslibrary.org/how-do-i/request-forreconsideration/>

- Name*

First Last

- Address*

Street Address City State
 ZIP Code

- Email

- Representing*

- Yourself
- An Organization

- Author*

- Title*

- Publisher

Leave blank if unkown.

- Type*

- Book Magazine Video
-

• Have you read the Library's Materials Selection Policy?*

-
- Yes No

• Did you read, view, or listen to the entire material?*

- Yes
- No, just parts

• What do you believe is the theme of this material?*



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- [1] The library's Mission Statement approved by the Board of Library Trustees
- [2] Service and Administration Policies, Board of Library Trustees.
- [4] CLEVNET, is a collaborative of 47 libraries in 12 counties located in northeast Ohio. It includes the automated catalog and circulation control system and offers a joint collection of e-media. Many technology functions of the library are offered as a part of our Clevnet membership.
- [5] OCLC, Not for profit computer service and research organization whose systems help libraries locate, acquire, catalog, and lend library materials. Our vendor for ILL services.
- [6] OhioLINK, the Ohio Library and Information Network, is a consortium of Ohio's college and university libraries and the State Library of Ohio