

# Spring Township Library Association Collection Development Policy

## I. Overview:

The purpose of the Spring Township Library Association Collection Development policy is to provide the community with carefully selected resources to help individuals of all ages gather information, research or choose items for entertainment. Since there are limitless choices of material, these items are chosen with consideration to the limitations of both space and budget. The selection policy must meet community interests and needs. It also acts as a way to educate both the library staff as well as the patrons about censorship challenges, and provide guidelines for accepting, declining, evaluating and acknowledging gifts.

A policy cannot replace the judgment of individual librarians but provides guidelines to assist them in choosing from the vast array of available materials. In selection, the librarian uses professional judgment and expertise, based on understanding of user needs and knowledge of authors, publishers, trends, and information resources in all formats.

The collection development policy, like all other policies, will be reviewed and/or revised as the need arises.

### A. Library Vision Statement

Spring Township Library and West Lawn-Wyomissing Hills Library enrich everyday life by providing a gathering place for all to learn, relax, and find the latest in technology.

### B. Community Vision Statement

Spring Township is a community that welcomes all and fosters opportunities for relaxation, exploration, learning and camaraderie.

There are approximately 27,000 citizens in the Township of Spring and the library hopes to meet the diverse needs of this community regardless of age, race, national origin, religious, social or political views. The library hopes to reflect its community in the kinds of items that it collects. The library shall create a facility that offers free service of materials to all members of the community. The library also wishes to provide a place where lifelong learning is possible. Its materials should help patrons pursue their educational endeavors or recreational interests. The library encourages all its members to use the materials provided and would like them to reach their potential as individuals, as members of the family, as well informed and productive citizens.

## C. Service Roles

### Popular Materials

The libraries feature a vibrant selection of current and classic materials for all ages in a variety of formats in response to community interests and demand. Materials are selected for: recreational interests and supporting life-long learning; the non-fiction collections being substantially published within the past ten years; and a selection of magazines and newspapers. Top priority is given to patron requests for popular materials. The staff is knowledgeable about current popular interests, a variety of reading interests, publishing trends, and children's and young adult literature. Audio/Visual collections, while some of the most popular formats, are maintained at a moderate level. Resources and space available limit A/V collection size.

## II. Selection of Library Materials

### A. Selection aids

Materials are selected from reviews in professional journals and general publications, patron recommendations, publishers' and booksellers' catalogs and flyers and by inspection of materials at professional conferences, trade shows and retail outlets.

### B. Principles

Materials are selected and retained on the basis of their content. Spring Township Library and West Lawn-Wyomissing Hills Library collections represent diverse points of view. The library collections, as much as possible, reflect the community and its diversity of interests, perspectives and backgrounds. The library also seeks to bring awareness of those cultures, traditions and ideas not represented in the local community. The selection principles promote the American Library Association's "Library Bill of Rights" and interpretations, "Freedom to Read Act," "Freedom to View Act," and "ALA guidelines for Access to Electronic Information" (See Appendices).

### C. General Criteria for Selection of Library Materials

In selecting materials for the library collections, the librarian will use the following general criteria, in random order:

- Appropriateness to library's mission and service roles
- Relationship to existing collection and other titles available
- Requests by patrons, advisory groups and staff
- Relevance to the experiences and contributions of diverse populations
- Levels of funding and cost of item

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- Anticipated use
- Authority, accuracy and accessibility of presentation
- Currency of information
- Reputation of author, publisher or issuing body
- Attention and response of critics, reviewers and general public
- Subject matter and scope
- Historical significance
- Quality and style of writing

### **III. Adult Collection**

At Spring Township Library, the Director has primary responsibility for the selection and maintenance of collections for adult patrons. At West Lawn-Wyomissing Hills Library, the Assistant Director has primary responsibility for the selection and maintenance of all collections.

#### **A. Fiction**

The collection focuses on twenty-first century literature including classics and standard titles, diverse genres and special interests. There is no single standard for inclusion in the fiction collection. Because of the large volume of fiction published, it is possible to purchase only a representative selection with emphasis on major authors and the most popular examples of a genre. Patron requests for fiction are purchased whenever possible and influence the addition of more copies. Genre fiction such as mysteries, romances, espionage, horror, thrillers, science fiction, fantasy and westerns are purchased in proportion to demand and use statistics. Efforts are made to complete series, purchase award winning titles and to represent local Pennsylvania authors, publishers and subject matter.

#### **B. Non-Fiction**

The nonfiction collection emphasizes timely, accurate and useful informational materials to support individual and community interests. It emphasizes materials that are current and in high demand. Resources are available for all ages and reading levels in a variety of formats. Materials are selected to represent a continuum of opinions and viewpoints when available.

Some priority areas include technology, general religion, job-hunting and resumes, personal finance, law for lay persons, test study materials, home repair, crafts, holidays, pets, gardening, health maintenance and diseases including alternative medicine, cookbooks, popular biographies, local interest and travel.

#### **C. Reference**

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Reference materials are for in house use. They provide quick, concise and up-to-date information

1. Ready Reference - a selection of high use reference items including directories, almanacs and encyclopedias can be found online using the Power Library sponsored by the State of Pennsylvania.
2. Consumer Information - a mix of reference and check-out items which aid consumers in purchasing decisions. An online subscription to Consumer Reports is available for up to date information on consumer issues and concerns.

### 3. Additional Selection Criteria for Reference

- Ease of use
- Format
- Authoritativeness
- Frequency of use
- Scope and depth of coverage
- Demands on subject areas which circulating collection cannot meet

## D. Electronic Resources

Spring Township Library and West Lawn-Wyomissing Hills Library are part of the national information infrastructure providing people with access to global electronic resources and the opportunity to participate in the electronic arena. Electronic information and networking is a rapidly developing area of public and private activity. The Libraries recognize that these developments pose new challenges as well as new opportunities for library users, board and staff. The Libraries believe that these challenges and opportunities are best addressed by adherence to the fundamental principles of traditional library use and the principles of a free society.

### 1. Internet Access [see full Internet and Computer Use Policy]

The Internet enables the library to provide information resources beyond the confines of its own collection. It allows access to ideas, information and commentary from around the globe. Currently it is a voluntary and unevenly regulated medium. While it offers a wealth of materials that are personally, professionally and culturally enriching to individuals of all ages, it also enables access to some material that may be offensive, disturbing and/or illegal, inaccurate or incomplete. The library provides free, filtered access to the Internet to library card holding adult patrons. In accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), our library has installed a filtering mechanism on all computers to protect young users from inappropriate material. Employees are unable to disable the filtering program.

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## E. Periodicals and Newspapers

Periodicals are an important source of new ideas, current topics, and consumer information and are in high demand as recreational reading material. Spring Township Library subscribes to a broad range of periodicals. Additional full text periodical coverage is provided through paid databases accessible in-house and most can be accessed remotely. At Spring Township Library, periodicals are generally retained for approximately three months in hard copy format. At West Lawn-Wyomissing Hills Library, periodicals are generally retained for the current year and certain periodicals such as Consumer Reports and the Historical Review of Berks County are retained for 3 years. The periodicals collection is reviewed annually for additions and deletions.

## F. Audio/Visual Materials

As with print materials, the audio/visual collections are selective rather than comprehensive in scope. All materials selected will contribute to the fulfillment of the goals of the Libraries as a whole, and criteria for the selection of audio and visual materials are much the same as those used by staff for other resources.

### 1. Audio Books

Audio materials are considered an adjunct to the print collection; this collection is not intended to mirror development of literature or to systematically cover non-fiction topics. Fiction is emphasized over non-fiction.

### 2. Music

The collection is intended to cover the broad spectrum of music over time, including significant works, composers, performers and performances. In general, the goal is to provide recordings of music of significant and enduring quality as well as a reflection current popular taste. A more extensive collection is available to card holders through online databases.

### 3. DVDs/Blu-ray Discs

The libraries shall provide basic information on a variety of subjects of interest to patrons and provide patrons with entertainment DVDs including feature films with an emphasis on family entertainment. Films are protected by copyright and are for home use only.

## IV. Collections for Youth and their Families

At Spring Township Library, the Youth Librarian has primary responsibility for the selection and maintenance of collections for patrons from infancy through 12th grade, their parents, teachers and caregivers. The primary collections include:

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- A. Picture Books – board books, wordless books, simple concept and informational books, classic and contemporary preschool stories and folklore.
- B. Early Readers – books specifically designed for the emerging reader with controlled and/or progressively constructed vocabularies.
- C. Juvenile Fiction - quality contemporary and historical fiction for readers from ages 8 to 12 years (2nd/3rd grade through 5th/6th) as well as genres (fantasy, science fiction, and mystery) fiction series and paperbacks.
- D. Juvenile Nonfiction - informational books for youth up to age 12 (grades 5/6) including items on mythology and folklore; physical and natural science; arts and crafts; sports; poetry; biography; and the culture, customs and history of people from regions of the U.S. and countries of the world. Special effort is made to coordinate with the local school district to complement the school media centers' selection of items that support their current curriculum.
- E. Juvenile Audio Books – children learn in different ways and including a selection of audio books offers a different avenue to experience literature.
- F. Juvenile DVDs - a quality selection of preschool learning and entertainment ideas; film versions of children's literature; selected non-fiction videos that reflect areas of interest across generations (i.e. dinosaurs, animals, ancient civilizations, etc.) and award winning children's films. Films kept in the juvenile section, if rated, are "G". All "PG" films are displayed in the Adult Film collection.
- G. Juvenile Periodicals - a selection of popular and quality children's magazines for use by children and their families.
- H. Young Adult Collection - collection of standard fiction for the recreational reading of youth ages 12 -17 (6th - 12th grades); a variety of teen centered magazines, a selection of manga and graphic novels and a selection of nonfiction resources for the personal interests of these youth, focusing on issues of adolescent development and self-identity.

## **V. Professional Collection**

A small collection of specialized materials pertaining to the management and development of public libraries is kept for use by library staff. All of these materials can be made available for use by patrons upon request, although they are generally non-circulating.

## **VI. Collection Maintenance**

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Spring Township Library Association recognizes the need for ongoing evaluation of its collections to assure currency and visually inviting and accessible collections. This ongoing maintenance includes weeding, replacement, repair, restoration, and review of standing order agreements. The most cost-effective option is selected when making replacement versus repair decisions.

#### A. Weeding Guidelines:

Discard:

- Materials due to space constraints
- Materials with obsolete content
- Materials in poor or irreparable physical condition
- Materials, which are infrequently used
- Duplicates

#### B. Retention Guidelines:

Retain:

- Materials with regular and on-going use
- Works containing useful local information
- Core selections in particular disciplines or topics

### **VII. Censorship and Reconsideration of Library Materials**

The Library Board of Trustees considers all materials selected under this policy to be constitutionally protected under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. The Library Board recognizes the right of individuals to question the inclusion, or deletion, of materials in the library collection. The Library will give serious consideration to each patron's opinion. It is the intent of the Spring Township Library Association Board of Trustees that no challenged library material shall be removed from the collection until after proper procedures are followed.

Patrons who object to the inclusion or removal of an item in the library's collection must follow the following procedures:

Discuss the item with the Director or Assistant Director of the library. After doing so if you desire further consideration, fill out the Request for Reconsideration form provided by the library staff and return it to the Director. The Director will review the request with the Board of Trustees at the next scheduled, public meeting. Challengers will receive a written response to their request. No formal consideration will be given to complaints unless the Request for Reconsideration form is completed in its entirety.

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If unsatisfied, challengers still wishing to express concerns to the Board about materials in the collection personally will be heard during a regular monthly meeting. The Board, after receiving testimony from the public and from the Library Director, will decide if the challenged material was placed in the collection in violation of this policy.

### **VIII. Interlibrary Loan**

Because of limited budget and space, the library cannot provide all materials that are requested. Therefore, interlibrary loan is used to obtain from other libraries those materials that are beyond the scope of this library's collection. In return for utilizing interlibrary loan to satisfy the needs of our patrons, the Spring Township Library and West Lawn-Wyomissing Hills Library agree to lend its materials to other libraries through the same statewide interlibrary loan network and the Berks County intra-library delivery system. The library will make an effort to have its current holdings listed in the Access PA database that is accessible by other libraries throughout the state.

### **IX. Gifts**

The libraries may accept gifts of materials and monetary donations to purchase materials. Often gifts are given in memory of a loved one or to commemorate a special event. Donated items will be carefully reviewed for their overall contributions to the Library's mission, service priorities and relevance to the collection. Materials donated to the Library will be added to the collection if they meet the criteria for materials selection and are in good physical condition. Items, which fall within the criteria for discarding, will not be added as gifts. Processing costs are also weighed before placing a gift in the collection. Exceptions to physical condition include rare, out of print, reference, and other materials that fill a specific gap in the collection.

Once given, all gifts are the property of Spring Township Library and will be treated on an equal basis with purchased materials with regard to the inclusion, display, housing, circulation and disposition of the material.

### **X. Appendices**

1. Spring Township Library Association's Internet and Computer Use Policy
2. Request for Reconsideration form
3. [Library Bill of Rights](#)
4. [Freedom to Read](#) statement
5. [Freedom to View](#) statement
6. [ALA Code of Ethics](#) (which governs the conduct of all staff members)

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