

I. SASKATOON PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD POLICY RELATED TO MATERIALS

I - 1. Selection and Acquisition of Materials

In keeping with the view of the library as a community institution dedicated to the service of all its residents, the Saskatoon Public Library Board believes that the collection should be broad, comprehensive and cosmopolitan.

Selection of material is made primarily on the basis of literary or artistic merit, authenticity, honesty of presentation, and usefulness to the intended user. It is possible that any given item or items may be regarded as offensive by some persons on political, religious or moral grounds. However, if the library is to fulfill its obligation to the community as a whole, it must provide a balanced collection of materials which represent varied points of view, including those of a controversial nature. The presence of an item in the library collection does not indicate an endorsement of its contents by the library but the Library Board affirms its support of the principles embodied in the Statement of Intellectual Freedom adopted by the Canadian Library Association, June 1974.

I - 1.1 GENERAL OBJECTIVES

The primary function of the Saskatoon Public Library is to serve the informational, cultural, and recreational needs of all residents of the community, including both adults and children. As a part of the one-library network of this province, and as recipient of provincial government grants, it also has an obligation, along with other libraries in Saskatchewan, to serve the needs of the larger province-wide community.

The objectives of the library are to acquire and organize book and non-book materials and to give guidance in their use; to provide information and research services to all who require them; to sponsor programs, (e.g. lectures, forums, workshops, demonstrations, concerts, film showings) in the promotion of continued learning, and to co-operate with other community agencies, groups and libraries in the province in the extension of library service in Saskatchewan.

I - 1.2 FACTORS IN SELECTION

The selection of materials for the library depends mainly on the following factors:

- The objectives of the library;
- The community served;
- The nature and quality of materials; and,
- The availability of funds for purchase of materials.

I - 1.3 THE OBJECTIVES OF THE LIBRARY AS A FACTOR IN SELECTION

The library has an obligation to ascertain and satisfy, to the best of its ability and in so far as available funds permit, the interests and needs of a population composed of individuals of varied economic, social, educational, and cultural backgrounds, and of differing religious and political affiliations.

In fulfilling this obligation, the library supplies materials designed to:

- Support information and research services;
- Satisfy needs for recreation, entertainment, cultural and intellectual stimulation;
- Support and complement formal study, continued learning, and informal self-education;
- Support program activities and projects undertaken by the library or community groups;
- Enable the library to act as a major resource centre within the one-library system of this province;
- Reflect the range and variety of publishers and producers of resources, including small presses and alternate sources;
- Recognize cultural obligation by supporting Canadian authors, producers, publishers, and distributors through selective purchasing whenever possible.

I - 1.4 THE COMMUNITY AS A FACTOR IN SELECTION

The primary factors in the community which affect the selection of materials are:

- The people, individually and collectively, who make up the population to be served;
- The existence and the availability of materials in other libraries and collections;
- The amount of funds the community can make available for purchase of books and other materials.

I - 1.5 THE PEOPLE

The selection of material is responsive to public demand, including that of special interest groups. An analysis of the community identifies a number of groups who are users or potential users of the library.

The city of Saskatoon is made up of many ethnic groups. The size and needs of these groups vary and are reflected in the selection of materials. Other segments of the population whose special needs are considered are:

- Pre-school children;
- The student community:
 - Elementary and secondary schools;
 - Kelsey Institute;
 - University of Saskatchewan;
 - Saskatoon Region Community College;
 - Other related educational institutions and agencies;
- The senior citizen community;
- People with disabilities (including the physically, mentally, and emotionally disabled);
- People who are economically and socially disadvantaged;
- People who are functionally illiterate and others of low reading level ability;
- The discriminating and well-informed users of library materials who wish to extend their knowledge or competence in any area or discipline.

The library recognizes the continuing need to identify groups for whom services could be extended or improved, and realizes that changes in the community and in society will create new demands to be evaluated in the future.

As a member and major resource centre of the one-library system in this province, the Saskatoon Public Library also selects materials with the needs of its larger public in mind.

I - 1.6 OTHER COMMUNITY RESOURCES

The kinds and availability of material in other libraries in the area, and the responsibility to co-operate with institutions, agencies, and organizations are important factors in selecting materials. Selection and withdrawal policies are also affected by resources outside the immediate area, and especially by those made available through agreements between this library, the Provincial Library, and other libraries in the province.

Service to the library patron may involve referral to other community sources or the borrowing of items from them. When a request cannot be filled through local resources, the Provincial Library is approached for materials either on direct loan or through interlibrary loan services.

Other sources of material in the community are:

- Special libraries whose collections are considered the primary information source for professionals, specialists, and research workers; and,
- Educational institutions, agencies, etc.

Responsibility for the provision of curriculum-related materials belongs primarily to the schools, colleges, and other educational institutions in the area. Textbooks are not collected by the library unless they would be acquired in the normal process of collection building, nor do funds permit extensive purchase of highly specialized, technical or scholarly material. However, selection is influenced by the heavy demand for materials to support and complement the courses offered by local educational institutions, and to meet the needs of graduates to whom materials may no longer be available from other sources. Also, as agencies and groups other than the traditional schools and colleges become involved in the educational process, the library may assume a responsibility to support their activities and to co-operate with them in the provision of materials and services.

NOTE: The public is invited to suggest materials for addition to the library collection. If considered suitable, and if funds are available, an item is ordered and reserved in the patron's name and he/she is notified upon its receipt. Items not ordered may be requested through interlibrary loan.

I - 1.7 THE NATURE AND QUALITY OF MATERIALS AS A FACTOR IN SELECTION

There is no single standard that can be applied to all acquisition decisions. To build collections of merit and significance, items are evaluated according to objective guidelines for each type of material and intended audience. Some of this material is locally or regionally produced and may be of special value because of its relevance to the area and/or the possible scarcity of information on the subject. It is important for the library to be aware of the existence of this material and to acquire items of interest whenever possible, through purchase, donation, or reproduction.

Technological changes have led to the production of a wide variety of materials in different formats, such as video-cassettes and slide/sound programs, which require special considerations, i.e. shelf space, proper maintenance, and a system for cataloguing and circulation. These are added to the total library collection as budgets and space permit.

All acquisitions are considered in terms of the following criteria:

- Relation to existing collection and other material on the subject;
- Suitability of subject and style for intended audience;
- Reputation, skill, competence and purpose of author, illustrator, composer, filmmaker, etc.
- Opinions of critics, reviews, and informed public;
- Appropriate and effective relationship between the medium and the content;
- Reputation, skill and competence of publisher or producer;
- Suitability of format for use by groups as well as individuals;
- Availability of funds for purchase.

I - 2. Withdrawals

It is a fundamental standard of all public libraries to weed collections on a regular basis. Leading practitioners in the library profession have recommended continuous weeding to maintain and/or improve the efficiency and vitality of all collections. Unnecessarily shabby and outdated items weaken a library collection, and the cost of shelving and storing these materials adds to the taxpayers' expense of supporting a community library service.

Weeding, removal, and replacement of items in the collection are also parts of the selection process. The ultimate responsibility for the selection and discarding of library materials lies with the Director of Libraries, acting under the general policies established by the Library Board. In practice, this authority is delegated to the department and branch heads and through them to designated staff working in the areas of service to children, young people, and adults throughout the system.

Established library standards dictate that at least five percent of total library holdings must be withdrawn every year if a viable public library collection is to be maintained. Culling books from a library collection is done responsibly, decisions being based on authoritative sources, recommended bibliographies, reviews and the expertise of professional and trained staff.

The following materials are considered for withdrawal each year:

- Obsolete, outdated, discredited materials and duplicates of titles in decreased demand;
- Materials that are shabby, soiled or mutilated beyond repair;
- Overdue items not returned after at least a year of staff efforts to retrieve them;
- Items stolen from the library.

Weeded items are recycled through, among other methods, the Friends Shop.