

COLLECTION MANAGEMENT POLICY



ILA's *Serving Our Public: Standards for Illinois Public Libraries* (revised edition) recommends that public libraries have a Collection Management Policy in place. Following are the topics that ILA recommends for inclusion in the policy, with references to the policies of the St. Charles Public Library District (Library) that incorporate them.

1. Description of community to be served.
2. Description of user groups to be served.
3. Purpose of the collection.
4. Responsibility for collection management.
5. Parameters of the collection.
6. Criteria for selection, replacement and withdrawal.
7. Gifts.
8. Provision for User Requests.
9. Reconsideration of Materials.
10. Statement on intellectual freedom adopting the Library Bill of Rights and other ALA intellectual freedom statements.

Purpose

The St. Charles Public Library's Collection Statement reflects our diverse community and the Library's core values of patron-centric service, innovation, excellence and stewardship. The collection supports the growth and creativity of the individual and fosters the spirit of community and local economy.

The Library believes that the collection is a core library service that reflects patron wants, needs and aspirations for inspiration, education and entertainment.

Collections are thoughtfully curated and available in multiple formats to facilitate accessibility and convenience, and sufficient materials and resources are available to meet community needs and expectations.

Principles

The Library supports the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights position statement, including the Freedom to View and Freedom to Read. These guiding documents protect the right of the individual to access information, even when the content may be controversial or unacceptable to others. Patron privacy and confidentiality are central to these patron-centric rights.

The Library is committed to resource sharing. We strive always to be a responsible borrower and lender and adhere to interlibrary loan codes and standard procedures. Membership in various library consortiums maximizes the prudent stewardship of taxpayer funds. In addition, these services enable access to the largest possible collections of materials at a local, state, and national level for our patrons. Consortia memberships include, but are not limited to, Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS) and System Wide Automated Network (SWAN), Amigos Library Services, and WorldShare Interlibrary Loan. Our membership in multiple consortiums demonstrates our belief that patron-centric service, innovation, excellence and responsible stewardship are collaborative endeavors.

Scope

All collection development work is aligned with the strategic goals and priorities of the St. Charles Public Library. The Board of Trustees of the St. Charles Public Library District delegates to the Director the overall responsibility of the development of the collections. Collections are built and maintained using a variety of professional methods and strive to serve the entire community, including all ages, socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, and educational needs. Collections are general in scope, and balanced in terms of subject coverage, point of view and interest level, thus representing an unbiased collection. The Library does not generally collect textbooks, workbooks, highly specialized or technical materials, or materials designed for one user/home use only. Materials significantly above the average price point of similar items in the collection are purchased at the discretion of the selector based on multiple factors including, but not limited to, local demand, uniqueness, and perceived lasting significance.

Circulation and other collection data is collected and analyzed by professional Library staff members using the ILS (integrated library system), as well as statistics from digital content providers. Additional collection evaluation is accomplished by Library staff members via use of library software tools like Collection HQ, and comparative reporting tools such as State of Illinois Public Library Annual Report (IPLAR), and PLAMetrics from the Public Library Association.

In addition, Library staff members collect feedback from our patrons - and community data and information – via surveys, demographic sources, and various avenues of customer interactions. Patrons' item requests and conversations directly inform the Library's collection choices.

Reference collections of St. Charles and Kane County local history, local newspapers, and local government documents are maintained. Genealogy reference materials relating to the area are also collected. The Library is not a government document depository and as documents become widely available online and are no longer produced in print, may choose to stop collecting

selected paper government documents. Reference collections are not archival, and while basic preservation measures are taken to ensure their usability and good repair, the Library is neither a museum nor archive and cannot provide specialized care, preservation, or security.

The Library collects materials primarily in English, as well as providing language instruction materials and resources for both English speakers learning foreign languages and non-English speakers learning English. To reflect the ethnic and cultural diversity of the community, when the population of the local community whose first language is not English nears 10% of the Library's total services population, a basic collection of materials in that language may be established. The Library currently develops a Spanish language collection.

We strive to offer collections in various formats to provide increased accessibility and for patron convenience.

Selection

The Library staff is responsible for the selection of the materials for the collection. No employee, including the Director, may be disciplined or dismissed for the selection of Library materials when the selection is made in good faith and in accordance with the written selection policy of the St. Charles Public Library.

Librarians, as selectors, undertake the selection of materials. Material selection criteria are informed by current events and local community interests; cultural and social trends; professional reviews; and staff professional knowledge and experience. Patron requests and recommendations are welcomed and are subject to the same selection criteria as other materials. Patron demand drives the addition of multiple copies of popular materials.

Librarians collect items in appropriate and available formats by adapting strategies that provide for the anticipated needs of patrons. Digital formats include electronic databases and resources, software and hardware, and devices. Digital curation takes into account the lifespan of the item, the product, and the product version to maintain currency, relevance, and sustainability.

Professional experience and judgment when selecting items includes considering item demand, publishing trends, cost, currency, availability through other libraries and duplication. Other considerations may include literary value, factual accuracy, reading and grade level, target audience, relation of the item to the existing collection, and item inclusion on standard library lists. In addition, the maturity of theme/topic is also relevant to the selection of materials for youth and young adults. The physical format of the item may be a consideration (item too big, too small, poor quality of the binding, packaging). Is the item most usable in print or a digital format? Selectors are mindful to include diverse and sufficient materials to educate, inspire, and entertain the entire community.

Deselected Materials

To maintain relevant collections and content in all formats, the Library must continuously evaluate collections and deselect materials. Criteria for withdrawing items include, but are not limited to, declining interest, poor condition, space limitations, unnecessary duplication, obsolete

format, or inaccurate or outdated information. Considerations are made for rare or out-of-print materials.

Annual withdrawals from the collection should be sufficient to maintain a useful and relevant collection and be sensitive to the available space. Different subjects may have different criteria for deselection. Librarians may deselect items that depend on currency of information based on publishing date and content, even if they are still circulating. Items that have not circulated in two years in fiction and in subject areas where usefulness is directly related to the currency of information (i.e., health or politics), will be considered for deselection. Items of lasting literary value or seminal works in a subject area may be maintained in the collection longer at the discretion of the selector for that area. Selectors may consult the Public Library Core Collection, a standard collection tool to help determine what titles may fall into this category. Overall, deselection helps maintain a healthy collection of items that are useful, attractive, accurate and relevant to our users.

Deselected materials may be used by Outreach Services for various purposes, given to the Friends of St. Charles Public Library, donated to other libraries, educational or non-profit organizations or discarded. The Library does not sell or give deselected materials directly to specific individuals upon request.

Gifts and Donations

The Library welcomes gifts and donations of materials or money for the purchase of items, equipment, or digital content for the Library collections. The Library Foundation and Friends of St. Charles Public Library maintain established funds for monetary donations.

Donations are tax-deductible.

Material donations are subject to the Library selection and deselection criteria.

Donated items not added to Library collections become “deselected materials”.

Reconsideration of Library Materials

Any community member has the right to request reconsideration of materials in the Library’s collection.

A Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials Form is available to community members online and may be submitted to the Library Director. If the patron feels that their recommendation has been answered unsatisfactorily, they may appeal to the Board. The Board’s decision is final.

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