

## Materials Selection and Access Policy

In order to provide guidance to librarians and to inform the public about the principles upon which purchased materials and services are selected, the following is stipulated:

Definitions: The word “materials” has the widest possible meaning. It may include, but is not limited to, books, pamphlets, maps, magazines and journals, newspapers, manuscripts, films, sound discs, sound tapes, videotapes, and digital information owned or accessed by the Library District, including the Internet.

Responsibility for Materials Selection: The ultimate responsibility for selection rests with the Library Director who operates within the framework of the policies approved by the Board of Trustees. The Library Director may authorize other staff to apply this policy in building the collection.

Criteria for Selection: These basic principles are applied as guidelines for selection:

1. authority and competency of the author, composer, filmmaker, etc.
2. comprehensiveness in breadth and scope
3. sincerity and fundamental objectivity
4. clarity and accuracy of presentation
5. appropriateness to the interests and skills of library users
6. relation to existing collection
7. relative importance in comparison with other materials on the subject
8. importance as a record of the time

Use of Library Material: The Library District recognizes that many materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some library users. Selections will not be made on the basis of any anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the works in relation to building the collection and to serving the interests of the Poughkeepsie community.

The Library District will neither mark nor identify materials to show approval or disapproval of the contents and no item will be sequestered except for the expressed purpose of protecting it from injury or theft.

The use of rare and scarce items of great value may be controlled to the extent required to preserve them from harm.

Responsibility for the reading, listening, and viewing of library materials by minors, including use of the Internet, rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection will not be inhibited by the possibility that materials may inadvertently come into the possession of minors.

Use of the collections and services owned and accessed by the Library District for patron use must be in accordance with prevailing local, state, and federal law as well as the Patron Code of Conduct.

### Guidelines for Selection

4. The Library District adheres to the principle contained in the American Library Association’s *Library Bill of Rights* and *Freedom to Read* statements. Both are accessible at [www.ala.org](http://www.ala.org).

2. The Library District recognizes the purpose and resources of the other libraries in Dutchess County and shall not needlessly duplicate functions and materials. Through cooperative agreements the resources of these libraries may be made available to the Poughkeepsie community.
3. The Library District acknowledges the purposes of educational programs for students of all ages provided by the educational institutions in the areas. Textbooks and curriculum-related materials for these programs are provided where the materials also serve the general public or where they provide information not otherwise available.
4. The Library District acknowledges a particular interest in local history. Therefore, it seeks to acquire materials, as they relate to the Mid-Hudson Valley, particularly Dutchess and adjoining counties in New York and Connecticut.
5. Because the Library District serves a public embracing a wide range of ages, educational backgrounds, and reading abilities, it will always seek to select materials of varying complexity.
6. In selecting materials for the collection, the Library District will consider the special, commercial, industrial, cultural, and civic enterprise of the community.

Gifts: The Library District accepts gifts of materials, but reserves the right to evaluate them and to dispose of them in accordance with established policy.

Maintaining the Collection: Materials that no longer serve a need may be removed from the collection. Decisions for removal will be based on circulation, physical condition, usefulness, age, and accuracy.

Reconsideration of Library Materials: The choice of library materials by patrons is an individual matter. While a person may reject materials for himself, censorship may not be exercised to restrict access to the materials by others. Recognizing that a diversity of materials may result in some requests for reconsideration, the following procedures have been developed to assure that objections or complaints are handled in an attentive and consistent manner.

- A. The person with the request for reconsideration would be referred immediately to the Library Director or, in his absence, the Assistant Director. The librarian in charge should explain to the patron that selections are made in accordance with the Materials Selection Policy of the Poughkeepsie Public Library District. If the user is not satisfied with the explanation received, a reconsideration request may be made in the following manner:
  1. The person making the request for reconsideration must complete a Request for Reevaluation of a Book or Other Library Materials form. This form is permanently attached to this policy.
  2. The Request for Reevaluation will be referred to a committee of the Library Director, the librarian selecting materials, and one other staff librarian.
  3. The committee will reconsider the item in question by using the Materials Selection Policy and reviews from recognized sources.
  4. The Library Director will then write to the patron regarding the committee's recommended action. Comments made by individual Committee members are to be held confidential by all concerned. Brief quotes, however, may be used in the Library Director's letter to the patron.
- B. If the patron desires further action, an appeal may be made to the Board of Trustees.

**Request for Reevaluation of Library Material**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Book? \_\_\_\_\_ If other material, describe: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person Making Request: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Person Represents Self?    Y    N

Person Represents Group?    Y    N

If yes, please name group: \_\_\_\_\_

What do you believe is the theme or purpose of the material? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Is your objection to this material based upon personal exposure to it or reports you have heard:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Have you read/heard, seen the material in its entirety?    Y    N

To what do you specifically object? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please forward completed form to:

Administrative Office  
Poughkeepsie Public Library District  
93 Market Street  
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601

Thank you.