

**Allenstown Public Library**  
**Collection Development Policy**

**August 31, 2012**

**I. Library Mission**

A publicly funded institution, the Allenstown public library serves the people of Allenstown as a gateway to resources for managing and enriching their lives. The library encourages independent learning, responds to the information needs of all ages, and supports educational endeavors from kindergarten through high school. The Allenstown public library nurtures a love of reading, fostering literacy in children and making connections for readers throughout their lives. The library promotes an informed and enlightened citizenry and strives to strengthen the fabric of the community.

In the development of its collection, the library recognizes that it is impossible for a small-sized public library to provide a balanced, comprehensive collection that is strong enough to meet all community needs.

**II. Responsibility for Collection Development**

The Board of Library Trustees considers and adopts a Collection Development Policy, which they authorize the Library Director to administer. The Director designates staff to develop selection and acquisition procedures and to make purchasing decisions subject to approval. The Director allocates the materials budget annually.

**III. Materials Selection Process**

Librarians use a variety of tools to aid in awareness and selection of materials, including such sources as professional review journals, popular print and broadcast media, bookstores, electronic interest groups, publishers' catalogs, purchase alerts, and patron and staff recommendations.

The library director exercises judgment, experience, and expertise in the application of the following Criteria for Materials Selection, making acquisition decisions as objectively as possible. Evaluation of a work includes the entire work, not just individual parts of the work. A work's overall contribution to the collection is a critical determinant for acceptance or rejection. No single criterion can be applied to all materials, and various criteria carry different weights in different circumstances. Contextual considerations – budget and space availability, interlibrary loan availability – also shape the selection process.

The library considers all acquisitions, whether purchased or donated, in terms of one or more of the following:

## Criteria for Materials Selection

- \* Level of funding for materials
- \* Relevance to Library's mission and service roles
- \* Informational and recreational needs of users
- \* Local demand
- \* Current usefulness or interest
- \* Community needs surveys and assessments
- \* Authority and accuracy
- \* Importance as a record of the times
- \* Relevance to the existing collection's strengths and weaknesses
- \* High standards of quality in content and format
- \* Price and availability
- \* Format, durability, and ease of use
- \* Suitability of format for subject and user's needs
- \* Relevance to the history of Allenstown

## IV. Scope of the Collection

Formats – The library provides materials and services that reflect the diverse educational, information, and recreational needs of its users. In so doing, the library provides access to content through print, multimedia and technology. The library recognizes that content and medium should be suitably matched, and that library patrons have different learning styles and preferences for how they receive information. Therefore, the library provides materials in a variety of formats, including, when appropriate:

- \* Print – such as hardcovers, paperbacks, magazines, and newspapers
- \* Non-print – such as audio and video formats, puzzles and games
- \* Digital resources – such as on-line databases; digital books and audio recordings

The Allenstown public library considers all types and formats of media to be in the realm of human expression and part of the human record. Because the library functions in a rapidly changing society, it is flexible about changes in communicative material, both in form and style of expression. The library does not reject materials for acquisition solely on the basis of medium. Materials in alternative formats are judged in terms of the Criteria for Materials Selection.

Children and Young Adults – The children's collection serves children through grade five. The children's collection focuses on highly recommended picture books for preschoolers and on popular reading and the information needs of children of school age. The young adults' collection serves young people from sixth through ninth grade. The Allenstown public library cooperates with the public school libraries so that their respective services may complement each other. Library staff strives to assemble non-fiction materials that complement the curriculum and respond to the homework needs of students through elementary, junior and senior high school.

The collection for children is chosen with the emphasis on materials that develop reading ability, inform children about the world around them, stimulate the imagination, and entertain. Materials are purchased in print and non-print formats including, but not limited to books, periodicals, and audio and video titles.

The Allenstown public library maintains a collection selected for young adults as a bridge to the adult collection. Selected materials address the interests and issues specific to this age group. An effort is made to provide titles that appear on school reading lists.

## VI. Collection Maintenance

In order to maintain a collection that is current, reliable, in good condition, well used, and which relates to the needs and interests of the residents of Allenstown, materials are withdrawn on a systematic and continuing basis. Materials are withdrawn when they are judged to be dated, inaccurate, seldom used, in poor condition, or otherwise not in compliance with the Criteria for Materials Selection. The CREW manual is used to direct weeding.

With the permission of the Board of Trustees, withdrawn materials are added to the library book sale. Outdated materials with no remaining value are donated to Bigheart Books.

The library applies the Criteria for Materials Selection in deciding whether to purchase replacement copies.

## VII. Gifts

The library evaluates all gift materials, according to the Criteria for Materials Selection. If a gift is integrated into the collection, the library reserves the right to decide the conditions of display, housing, access, and withdrawal of the material. Gifts that are declined are passed to the book sale, or returned to the donor with a brief explanation of why the item is unsuitable.

The Allenstown public library does not appraise gift materials for tax purposes.

## VIII. Controversial Materials: Intellectual Freedom

The Allenstown public library does not promote particular beliefs or views. Rather, it provides a resource for the various opinions, which apply to important, complex, and controversial questions, including unpopular and unorthodox positions. Language, situations, or subjects that may be offensive to some community members do not disqualify material which, in its entirety, is judged to be of value.

The library does not mark or identify materials to show approval or disapproval of contents. The library also does not mark materials to restrict their use by ages, or sequester them except to protect valuable items from injury or theft. The library does not rely on private advisory codes or rating services in developing collections, nor does the library remove such ratings if they are an integral part of the item or its packaging.

The library recognizes parents and legal guardians as the parties responsible for the reading and viewing habits of children. The selection of materials for the adult collection is not restricted by the possibility that children may obtain materials their parents or guardians consider inappropriate.

Concerns about materials in the library's collections may be directed to the library director.