

# **COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY BERKELEY HEIGHTS PUBLIC LIBRARY**

Approved May 13, 2002, Reviewed and Revised September 12, 2011, Revised May 14, 2018

## **BACKGROUND:**

A Collection Development policy outlines the philosophy and standards used to determine the acquisition, retention and removal of materials in BHPL's collection. It defines selection policy, assigns responsibility, and provides the means for public input.

The Collection Development Policy is based on the following:

BHPL will acquire, organize, preserve and distribute materials and information in a variety of formats for the use of people of all ages and backgrounds in the community.

BHPL will research and identify the information needs of the community.

BHPL will examine and evaluate priorities for service in response to the community's evolving needs.

BHPL will provide opportunity and encouragement for life-long learning through the use of BHPL's facilities, materials, resources, programs and personnel.

BHPL will provide materials, resources and programs to facilitate the pleasurable use of leisure time.

BHPL endorses the American Library Association's *Library Bill of Rights*, *The Freedom to Read*, and *Freedom to View Statement*.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

As established by N.J.S.A. 40:54-12, The Board of Trustees is responsible for the selection of library materials. The Board of Trustees holds the final authority for developing policies concerning collection development and the corresponding budget priorities. The Board delegates to the Director the responsibility for materials selection and withdrawal. The Director may delegate material selection and withdrawal responsibilities for specific areas within the collection to the Department Heads of the Children's, Circulation and Reference Departments.

## **SCOPE OF THE COLLECTION:**

As a municipal library, the first level of service within the New Jersey Library Network structure, BHPL's collection will be developed and maintained to emphasize generality rather than comprehensiveness or depth. BHPL will purchase materials that reflect as

varied a range of interests, opinions and mores as is evident in the community. In its efforts to provide a wide range of views, BHPL will inevitably purchase materials on controversial subjects or by controversial authors. BHPL recognizes that some materials may displease some members of the community, but the goal of serving a diverse population results in a collection reflecting that diversity.

BHPL will maintain a separate collection of children's materials in a variety of formats selected to meet the information and recreational needs of children from birth through sixth grade. Young Adult and Teen fiction collections are maintained to serve the needs of older children.

Textbooks will be purchased when they are the best source of information available on a specific subject, but BHPL will not automatically purchase the textbooks used in local schools.

Databases and other electronic resources are provided through a variety of sources: purchase by BHPL; purchase and access through a consortium; or, made available by the New Jersey State Library. Again, the goal of serving the needs of the entire community will apply.

## **ACCESS TO THE COLLECTION**

It is the right and responsibility of the individual to select the materials he/she will use. It is the duty and privilege of parents to supervise the reading, viewing and listening habits of their children. BHPL cannot assume such a role in loco parentis. As adults have full access to children's materials, children have full access to adult materials. BHPL places labels on materials to assist the patrons who wish to borrow them. These labels are intended to describe the contents of the material (Science Fiction or Mystery) or the reading and/or interest level (Juvenile, YA or Teen). Labels are not used to restrict the use of any items.

As necessary, BHPL may place materials in special locations. This decision is based on space considerations (Stacks), physical condition of the materials or local history. Placement in a special location does not imply censorship.

## **CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS**

Selection of materials is based on generally accepted professional standards. Recommendations may come from the following sources:

- Book reviews in professional library literature
- Standard bibliographic sources
- Book reviews in non-library literature
- Recommendations from library patrons
- Media reviews (for the purchase of audiovisual materials)
- Other appropriate reviewing media

Materials are selected to meet certain criteria and standards, including, but not limited to:

- Anticipated usefulness to the public
- Quality of a particular title within its genre
- Informational or educational value
- Popularity of the author or particular title
- Inclusion on the New York Times Best Seller List
- Permanence or timeliness of the materials
- Recreational value
- Necessary to fill undeveloped areas in the collection
- Reliability of the publisher
- Anticipated usefulness to the staff as a management tool
- Suitability of format and/or physical condition
- Local author or subject matter

### **PURCHASE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PATRONS**

Requests and recommendations from patrons are welcome and will be given consideration using the Criteria for the Selection of Library Materials. If BHPL does not purchase a requested title, every effort will be made to fill the request through inter-library loan. Request forms are available at the Reference, Circulation and Children's Desks. In the case of materials which may not be available for interlibrary loan (i.e. reference materials, periodicals, items restricted by loaning library), every effort will be made to locate the materials if the patron is willing to visit other libraries.

### **REVIEW OF LIBRARY MATERIALS**

The following steps are to be taken if a patron wishes to question the appropriateness of any library material:

1. The staff member to whom the question is first addressed will discuss the complaint with the patron. If the patron is not satisfied with the result of this discussion, a *Request for Reconsideration* (attached) form will be given to the patron. The completed form must be returned to the Director.
2. The Director will review the *Request for Reconsideration* and reply in writing to the patron. A patron who is not satisfied with the reply may appeal to the Library Board of Trustees.
3. When the Library Board of Trustees receives an appeal from a patron, it will discuss the complaint at the next regularly scheduled meeting. The patron will be notified and invited to attend. The patron will be promptly informed of the Board's decision.

## **GIFTS**

BHPL is pleased to accept donations of money and materials to support library services.

Money given as a memorial, in honor of a person, or as a gift will be used to purchase needed additions to the collection. If the donor specifies a particular interest, every effort will be made to purchase in that subject area. If the donor specifies a particular title, the Director will review the request according to the *Criteria for Selection of Library Materials*.

Based on space constraints, donations of books/material may be limited to those items approved in advance by the Library Director.

## **WEEDING AND DISCARDING**

Materials are continually withdrawn from the collection. The choice of materials to be withdrawn is determined by the professional staff under the supervision of the Director. The following factors will be taken into consideration:

- Subject coverage available in the collection
- Number of copies
- Age of material (differs according to subject area)
- Physical condition
- Editions available
- Circulation/use
- Space limitations

Withdrawn materials are disposed of through the sale cart, donation to other libraries and/or agencies, or otherwise discarded.

BERKELEY HEIGHTS PUBLIC LIBRARY  
REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Author/Producer \_\_\_\_\_

Request initiated by \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

What brought this title to your attention?

Have you read/listened to/viewed the entire work? YES NO (please circle)

Please comment on the work as a whole.

Please comment on the specifics that concern you.

Are you familiar with reviews of this title by literary or other critics? YES NO

What would you like BHPL to do about this title?

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Return to: Library Director  
Berkeley Heights Public Library  
29 Park Avenue  
Berkeley Heights, New Jersey 07922