

**Purpose Statement:**

The purposes of this policy are to guide staff in the selection of materials and to inform the public about the how and why we purchase materials. These priorities in purchasing are there to shape the future collection and as a rationale for budget allocations. This policy will be reviewed and revised by the Board of Trustees as needed.

**Library Mission Statement:**

Libbie Cass Library’s mission is to be a place of connection, community, and education to Springfield through our facility and the interlibrary networks. Our goal is to encourage a life-long love of reading for recreation and information for all ages while providing access to information through public computers and the internet.

**Intellectual Freedom Statement:**

The Libbie Cass Library endorses the principals found in the [Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom To Read Statement](#) (Appendix I and II) of the American Library Association (ALA). There are various information needs and interests with Springfield citizens. The library will reflect those needs and will uphold the right of the individual to access that information, even though it might be objectionable to others.

**Access:**

The Libbie Cass Library provides equal access to all library materials for all library users. Some materials might not be suitable for all ages, in which case the parent or guardian is responsible for what a child checks out on a library card or views on a computer.

**Selection Authority:**

The Library Director is responsible for selection of all print and non-print materials purchased by the Libbie Cass Library. Patron requests for specific materials will definitely be considered.

**Selection Criteria - General**

The library’s goal is to meet the informational needs of Springfield’s community members as far as budget, space, and staffing allows.

1. The main points considered in the selection of materials are:
  - a. Existing library holdings
  - b. Current collection priorities
  - c. Individual merit of each item
  - d. Popular appeal/patron demand

- e. Availability of the material or information elsewhere.
- f. Budget

2. Reviews are important but not the only determining factor concerning new materials. Good sources for reviews are: Library Journal, Booklist, Kirkus, Publisher's Weekly, Book Page, School Library Journal, and Horn Book. The lack of reviews or an unfavorable review shall not be the only reason for rejecting a title which is in demand.

3. No materials will be excluded because of the race, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, political or social view of the author. The library must maintain a neutral point of view to serve the needs of the entire community.

4. Due to limited space and budget, the library cannot purchase all materials that are requested by patrons. Any materials suggested but not purchased, and published more than six months previously, will be requested as an InterLibrary Loan from another library.

### **Selection Criteria (Adult and Children's / Young Adult materials--Print, Audio and DVDs)**

Collection development for all materials is a balance between books and series that are popular and trendy, and books that will have long term value. Potential titles for reviews can be found in library magazines and newspapers. Our goal is to meet the needs of the hesitant reader and the voracious reader. The reading tastes of the Springfield community and regular visitors to the library will be given special attention.

### **Selection Criteria (NH Downloadable Books)**

The NHDB collection consists of fiction and nonfiction ebooks and audiobooks, and aims to supplement the popular physical collection found in NH public libraries. Digital materials are selected by the state library with consideration of patron demand, popularity, availability and cost.

### **Collections Maintenance - Weeding**

An up-to-date, attractive, and useful collection is maintained through a continual withdrawal and replacement process. Replacement of worn volumes is dependent upon condition, current demand, usefulness, more recent acquisitions, and availability of newer editions. This ongoing process of weeding is the responsibility of the Library Director and staff. Withdrawn materials will be handled in a similar manner as donated materials. They will be offered to the public, sent to Better World Books, or recycled.

The Libbie Cass Library subscribes to the CREW method when weeding the collection. (Continuous Review, Evaluation, and Weeding). The CREW method uses an acronym, MUSTIE, to indicate when an item should be removed.

Misleading and/or factually inaccurate or out-of-date  
Ugly (worn out beyond mending)  
Superseded by a new edition or a better source  
Trivial (of no discernible literary or scientific merit)  
Irrelevant to the needs and interests of the community  
Elsewhere (the material may be easily borrowed from another source)

### **Gifts/Donations of Materials**

1. Books and other materials will be accepted on the condition that the library has the authority to decide what to do with them. They could be added to the collection, offered to the public, sent to Better World Books, or recycled.
2. Gifts of money, art objects, antiques, and real or personal property will be accepted at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.
3. The library will not store materials which are not outright gifts.

### **Requests for Reconsideration - Challenged Materials**

The Libbie Cass Library recognizes that some materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons. Selection of materials will not be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval but solely on the principles in this policy.

### **Procedures for Request of Reconsideration of Library Materials**

Patrons requesting that material be withdrawn or restricted within the collection may complete a Request for Reconsideration form, available on the library website. The patron will also be given a copy of ALA's Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, Freedom to View, which we have adopted as part of our library policies.

Complete Request of Reconsideration forms will be reviewed by the Library Director and the material will be evaluated based on the complaint. The Director will issue a written decision to the patron, which may be appealed to the Library's Board of Trustees. In the event of an appeal, the inquiry will be placed on the agenda of the next Trustee Meeting. The Board will issue a written decision to the patron within 7 business days of the meeting. The decision of the Board of Trustees is final.

## Appendix I: Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries that make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961;

June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>

## Appendix II: Freedom to Read Statement

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government Officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights. We therefore affirm these propositions:

- 1. It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the Majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

*2. Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks Proper.

*3. It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

*4. There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

*5. It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

*6. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own*

*standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

*7. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.

A Joint Statement by:

[American Library Association](#)  
[Association of American Publishers](#)

Subsequently endorsed by:

[American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression](#)  
[The Association of American University Presses, Inc.](#)  
[The Children's Book Council](#)  
[Freedom to Read Foundation](#)

### Appendix III: Freedom to View Statement

The FREEDOM TO VIEW, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore these principles are affirmed:

1. To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantees of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association (formerly the Educational Film Library Association) and was adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.

<http://www.ala.org/vrt/professionalresources/vrtresources/freedomtoview>



REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF MATERIALS

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent

\_\_\_\_\_ Myself

\_\_\_\_\_ Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

**Material for Consideration**

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Type of material (book, DVD, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Author/Publisher \_\_\_\_\_

Call Number (Spine Label) \_\_\_\_\_

Did you read, view, or listen to the material in its entirety? YES NO

Have you read any reviews of this material? YES NO

Have you read the Libbie Cass Library Collection Development Policy? YES NO

Please describe your concerns regarding this material (please be specific, list page numbers/sections. Use the back of the page if necessary: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of complainant \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_