

Hingham Public Library

Policy on Library Materials and Programs

Objectives:

The Hingham Public Library places major emphasis on informational, recreational and educational functions. It recognizes the importance of basic materials of permanent value, timely materials on current issues, and programming that serves the needs of the community. Materials will be purchased in the format that best suits patron needs.

Guidelines:

The Trustees of the Hingham Public Library support the Library Bill of Rights promulgated by the American Library Association (ALA), and it serves as the basis for this policy and other lending policies of this Library, as well as development of library-initiated programs. Choice of materials and programming will result from a variety of professional activities on the part of the Library Director, Collection Development Librarian, Children's and Young Adult Librarians, and specifically designated staff. Reviews of new books from both professional journals and popular reviewing media form an important tool in the selection process. Recommendations from the staff and the public are also welcome and evaluated within the framework of the selection process.

All subsequent references to "programs" in this document refer to "library-initiated programs", as defined by the ALA:

Library-initiated programs include, but are not limited to, lectures, displays, exhibits, community forums, performing and visual arts, participatory workshops, technology programming, creative learning programming, wellness programs, story times, continuing education, fairs and conventions, book clubs, discussion groups, demonstrations, and presentations for social, cultural, educational, or entertainment purposes. Library-initiated programs may take place onsite at the library, off-site at other locations, or online, and may be provided by library workers, volunteers, or partners. Libraries may also choose to promote their programs, services, and resources through displays and digital signs (ALA, 2019, "Library-Initiated Programs as a Resource, para. 2).

Responsibility:

The Library Director has the final responsibility for the selection of programs and selection of all materials to be incorporated into the Library's collection, regardless of the mode of acquisition.

Selection of programs and selection and purchase of library materials rests with the Director who may delegate some responsibilities to other staff members. Staff will adhere to accepted professional practices when making selection decisions. The recreational, educational, and informational needs of the community, as they fit within the selected services responses, will be considered in selecting materials and programs.

It is the Director's responsibility to provide materials and programs that are of both current interest and permanent value and that are responsive to the interests and needs of every segment of the community. It is also the Director's responsibility to ensure that the selection of materials and programs does not discriminate against any political, religious, economic, or social view or group through deliberate exclusion. The Director shall try to provide for a diversity of materials and programs without exercising either direct or implied censorship. The Director shall be responsible for expending available funds in an equitable manner so that all divisions of the collection receive a just proportion of said funds.

Selection Standards:

General

All acquisitions, whether purchased or donated, as well as all programs, are considered in terms of the standards listed below. However, an item or program need not meet all of the standards in order to be acceptable. Materials and programs are evaluated on the significance of the entire work rather than individual parts. When judging quality, several standards and combinations of standards may be used. The following standards will guide selection of materials and programs, as applicable:

- Contemporary significance or permanent value
- Community interest
- Accuracy of content
- Reputation and/or authority of the author, editor or illustrator, or presenter
- Literary merit
- Relation to existing collection and to other materials on the subject
- Price, availability, and demand
- Format and ease of use
- Scarcity of information in the subject area
- Availability of material in other area libraries
- Attention of critics, reviewers, media and public

The Library recognizes that some materials or programs may be controversial and might offend some patrons. Selection will not be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval of any group of patrons but solely on the basis of the standards stated in this policy. Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of their contents,

and no library material will be sequestered, except to protect it from theft. Responsibility for the reading and program attendance of children rests with their parents or legal guardians.

Material Specific

Magazines are purchased to supplement the collection, provide recreational and professional reading, and/or provide material not yet available in book form. Selection of magazines will be based upon their consideration as authoritative, objective, of local interest and demand, and will be indexed in standard periodical indexes.

Gifts of books and other items will be accepted on the condition that the Director or specifically designated staff has the authority to make whatever disposition he or she deems advisable. Gifts will be judged using the same standards as purchased materials.

Collection Maintenance:

To maintain the effectiveness of the Library's total collection, the Library will systematically remove materials no longer useful. The Library does not automatically replace all materials withdrawn because of loss, damage or wear. Need for replacement is weighed with regard to several factors: number of duplicate copies, existence of adequate coverage of a field, similar material in the collection, later or more authoritative materials as well as current demand for the particular subject or title.

Approved by the Board of Trustees November 19, 1975

Revised and approved by the Hingham Public Library Board of Trustees May 20, 2020

References:

American Library Association. (2019). *Library-initiated programs and displays as a resource: An interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights*. (Adopted by the ALA Council January 27, 1982, amended June 24, 2019).