ABOUT THE LIBRARY AND ITS COMMUNITY

Elkhart Public Library functions as a major information source for the community and provides a broad and relevant collection of materials for informational, educational, and recreational purposes to people of differing ages, ethnic and racial backgrounds, lifestyles, and points of view.

Decisions regarding collection development are made with an understanding of the dynamic and diverse nature of the community. In order to best meet the needs of a changing population, collection development librarians consider such factors as citywide and neighborhood demographics as well as projected changes for given geographic areas within the library's district. When making decisions about collection materials, collection developers consider community suggestions and comments as well as staff analysis of circulation patterns.

Usage of library materials and collections is an individual matter. While any library user may reject for themselves library materials of which they do not approve, the individual cannot exercise this right of censorship to restrict the freedom of others to use these materials.

Responsibility for the use of library materials by children and teens rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection of materials will not be inhibited by the possibility that such items may inadvertently come into the possession of children or teens.

A. GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSE

1. The Elkhart Public Library hereby establishes a policy to serve as a guide to library staff charged with collection development and to answer questions from library users about selection.

2. The purpose of collection development is to obtain, organize, and make readily available to community members a diverse array of ideas and information.

3. The aim of effective collection development is wise and efficient use of available funds to secure the best resources for the community in a variety of formats. The basic considerations are quality of the materials, the permanent nature of the collection, current requirements, expected future needs, and a representation of the particular needs and interest of the community. Library user suggestions for materials are also considered, but purchase is not guaranteed.

4. The library is guided by the following documents (see appendixes):

   a. American Library Association Code of Ethics
   b. Library Bill of Rights
   c. Freedom to Read statement
   d. Freedom to View statement

B. SELECTION GUIDANCE

1. Professional librarians use their experience and knowledge of books and other resources, publishers, the community, and the library collection as a whole in the process of collection development.

2. Specific criteria used in selecting materials and resources include but are not limited to the following:

   a. Reputation of publisher, artist, author, or subscription service
   b. Timeliness of content
   c. Significance of content
   d. Usability and accessibility of digital resources
   e. Literary, artistic, or educational merit
   f. General intent of the author or artist
   g. Popular demand
   h. Awareness of accurate representation of people and cultures
   i. Authenticity of history or social setting of the time period
   j. Consideration of the work as a whole
   k. The relationship of all these to the library users

3. Collection development strives to include resources that present a diversity of perspectives.

4. The decision to purchase resources which some library users may consider offensive is guided by qualified reviews; the general intent of the author or artist; the status of the material as literary, artistic, or educational material; and popular demand.

5. Selection of and access to electronic resources are integral to fulfilling the mission and objectives of the EPL. The Library provides a number of web-based resources available via the Library's website. Only web-based resources accessed over the Internet that are specifically selected using the criteria outlined in this policy are a part of the collection.

6. Due to the library's membership in consortia and subscriptions to online databases, some resources available through EPL may contain specific print and digital items selected by other consortium members and vendors.

7. All staff contribute to the development of a collection driven by patron needs and expectations by engaging in open, continuous two-way communication with patrons and other staff. The community has a role in shaping library collections by participating in the collection development process through suggestions and feedback.

C. SOURCES

Sources for collection development include both professional and general interest publications as well as online sources covering a wide variety of subject areas.

D. REPLACEMENTS

Replacement of a missing, lost, or damaged library item is based on availability; the permanent value and importance of the item; user demand; and the item's relationship to other selection criteria.

E. COST

Cost is a basic consideration in selection of particular items. Purchases are to be essential additions to the total collection.

F. EDITIONS

If a choice of editions is possible, currency, durability, quality of material, general format, and the reliability of the editor, publisher, or producer are important considerations.

G. COLLECTION MAINTENANCE

Collections are regularly evaluated for currency, physical condition, and demand. Items are to be repaired, replaced or removed as appropriate.

Continuous evaluation is necessary to ensure that the collection is responsive to patrons' needs and that the materials are useful and accessible. Items are regularly removed to keep the collection current, accurate, appealing, and appropriately sized for the allocated space. The same guidelines used for selection of library materials provide the underlying principles for deselection.

When considering what to remove from the collection, EPL uses industry-standard **CREW** (**C**ontinuous **R**eview, **E**valuation, and **W**eeding) Method Guidelines and the following criteria:

1. Lack of use and/or demand

2. Duplicate copies at same location/branch

3. Damage or wear that cannot be mended

4. Inclusion of inaccurate information, for example:

   a. Outdated scientific or medical data
   b. Misrepresentation of peoples and/or cultures

5. Item is irrelevant, outdated, or superseded by an updated version

6. Consideration of the work as a whole

H. ADOPTION
1. Adopted by the Elkhart Public Library Board of Trustees: November 16, 2021
2. Supersedes Collection Development Policy adopted May 21, 2019
3. Supersedes Collection Development Policy adopted September 23, 2014
4. Supersedes Selection Policy adopted: May 19, 2010