

Lucy Robbins Welles Library Materials Selection Policy

Purpose and Scope:

This policy is guided by the Lucy Robbins Welles Library's mission to provide information, education, and cultural enrichment for the Newington community through a commitment to excellence in library resources. The Library is a place for voluntary inquiry, the dissemination of information and ideas, and the promotion of free expression and free access to ideas. This policy provides an overview of the principles and methods used for selecting, maintaining, evaluating, and deselecting materials for the library's collection. The Library recognizes the diversity in our community and makes every effort to provide materials that represent a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints. Library materials should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all residents.

Responsibility for Selection:

Under the supervision of the Library Director, the Head of Collection Management and Head of Children's oversee the selection, maintenance, and deselection of materials in the Adult and Children/Teen sections, respectively. Professionally trained staff from all library departments are responsible for collection development across various sections of the collection, providing access to the widest array of library and educational materials. The Library Director is responsible for the collection as a whole.

Types of Materials, Digital Collections, and Databases:

The Library strives to provide materials in a wide variety of formats. The collection comprises physical materials such as books, magazines, newspapers, audiobooks, music CDs, DVDs, Blu-rays, video games, board games, lawn games, musical instruments, and mobile hotspots. Additionally, the library has a collection of electronic resources, including e-books, e-audiobooks, digital music, digital videos, and databases.

The Library values providing an accessible collection for people with different needs. To that point, large print books, audiobooks, closed captioned audiovisual materials, and electronic materials are selected for people who need these formats.

Due to changing technology in the world, the Library adapts its collection over time to meet patrons' needs.

Many of the Library's databases and electronic resources come with a pre-selected set of items. Therefore, Library staff choose such resources based on their value as a whole; the Library is unable to control every item contained within such resources.

The Library does not supply textbooks for the educational needs of students in the community (whether primary, secondary, or tertiary education). However, library staff cooperate with local schools to provide materials that are helpful to students in the community.

Criteria for Selection of Materials:

Overall, it is the Library's aim to be inclusive and not exclusive in developing the collection. All library materials are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with protections against discrimination set forth in section 46a-64 of the CT general statutes. Professional library staff select materials for the collection based on a wide range of factors. This policy outlines a procedure for a librarian to review library and educational material within a public library using professionally accepted standards: material relevance, physical condition, availability of duplicates, availability of age-appropriate or grade-level material, and continued demand of material when considering materials for acquisition. No single standard can be applied to all items; however, these are general criteria for selection:

- Relevance to the current and anticipated interests and needs of the community
- Inclusion of experiences and contributions of diverse populations
- Positive reviews in professional publications, judgments of experts in the field, bestseller lists, and publicity
- Popularity, including the need for multiple copies to meet the demand
- Reputation and authority of authors, illustrators, publishers, and producers
- Literary and scholarly excellence, quality of writing, artistic quality, and originality
- Accuracy, significance, timeliness, and permanence of subject matter
- A balanced collection across all subject areas, age groups, and grade levels
- Accessibility (readability, clarity, sound quality, visual quality) of materials in all formats
- Physical condition of materials
- Availability of the item or similar items from libraries in the region
- Availability and affordability of materials
- Local interest

The Library welcomes requests from the public. Staff review these requests, taking into account the same criteria listed above. Request forms are available at the Adult Information Desk.

Maintenance and Deselection of Materials:

Not only does library staff select new materials for the collection, but there is also the constant process of maintaining the existing collection. The Library replaces, rebinds, and repairs items that are out-of-date or worn out. If an item is in poor condition, library staff will make the decision whether to replace the exact item, find a newer comparable item, or remove the item from the collection. These decisions are made with the above selection criteria in mind.

The Library also has an ongoing process of deselecting, or removing materials (often called "weeding"). Staff refer to the guidelines outlined in the CREW (Continuous Review, Evaluation, and Weeding) Manual for Libraries when removing items from the collection. As there are criteria for selecting new materials, there are also criteria for deselecting materials. The Library deselects materials when:

- An item does not circulate frequently, or is no longer of interest to the community

- An item is in an obsolete format, or has become available in a more desirable format
- An item is in poor condition
- Information contained in the work is outdated, inaccurate, or plagiarized
- There are newer or more comprehensive editions of a work
- There are duplicate copies of a title after demand has decreased
- The Library needs to create space for newer, more relevant items

Certain items, such as materials on local history and classic works of literature, are kept in the collection regardless of the above criteria. This is due to their permanent relevance.

When items are removed from the collection, if they are in good condition, they are given to the Friends of the Lucy Robbins Welles Library. This non-profit organization sells former library items at its book sales, which raises money for the library. If materials are in poor condition at the time of removal, they are discarded properly.

Gifts and Donations:

The Library accepts donations of materials. In order to add a donated item to the collection, it must meet the selection criteria listed above. Items are added to the collection at the Library staff's discretion. If an item does not meet the criteria to be added, it may be donated to the Friends of the Library for them to sell at their book sales.

The Library also accepts monetary donations and gifts. If a donor has a specific request for their donation, they may contact the Library's administrative department to discuss it. Any materials purchased with monetary donations must also meet the selection criteria outlined in this policy.

Controversial Materials:

In developing a balanced collection for a diverse community, not every person will agree with everything contained in the collection. Some acquisitions may be unorthodox, unpopular or controversial in nature. The Library does not select items based on anticipated approval or disapproval for every person; rather, materials are selected based on the merit of the work and creating a well-balanced collection for the community as a whole. The Library's acquisition of materials does not constitute endorsement of their content; but rather, allows for their free expression. Works are also judged as a whole and not by parts or excerpts.

To maintain neutrality, library staff will never mark or label an item to show approval or disapproval. Additionally, all library materials are kept on open shelves with the exception of delicate or valuable materials. As all library users have unhindered access to almost all materials, the Library asserts that parents and guardians are responsible for their children's reading, listening, and viewing choices.

Intellectual Freedom and Censorship:

The Library recognizes that not all users will appreciate all materials to the same degree. Therefore, some materials in the collection may seem controversial and even undesirable to some Library users. It is the right of the individual not to read, view, or hear materials that they find objectionable. It is never the right of any Library user to deny access to Library materials to

others. The freedom to choose from a broad range of informational and artistic materials will not be limited. When evaluating materials, the Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read Statement, and Freedom to View Statement from the American Library Association are used as guiding documents.

Request for Reconsideration:

A library user wishing to express their concern about an item in the collection must read the Library's "Materials Review and Reconsideration Policy" [\[LINK\]](#). After that, they may fill out the "Statement of Concern about Library Materials, Events, and Displays" form [\[LINK\]](#) in its entirety. The Library limits consideration of requests to individual residents of Newington who hold a valid Newington Library card. The form will be reviewed by the Library Director, who will respond within sixty days of receipt.

Location:

This policy is housed on the Lucy Robbins Welles Library website: [\[URL\]](#) and at each service desk in the library.

A copy is maintained in the Library's Administration Office

This policy is in accordance with Public Act 25-168, Sec. 322, 323.

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Lucy Robbins Welles Library Board of Trustees