

# Sunderland Public Library — Sunderland, MA

## Collection Development Policy

### **Purpose of the library and community to be served**

The Sunderland Public Library provides access to materials and services to meet the recreational and informational needs of the citizens of Sunderland, Massachusetts and of all our patrons. Our primary emphasis is on meeting the need for popular materials for all ages. In addition, the library provides complementary educational support for the elementary and secondary school levels and outreach services to the entire community.

The library maintains a collection of materials sufficient to serve as a first resource for reference and independent learning, as well as for popular reading, for all ages. The library seeks to complement the library resources of the schools serving Sunderland and not to duplicate their special functions or holdings. The library will not attempt to purchase materials required by formal courses of education unless those materials are of general interest and otherwise conform to the library's selection criteria. Access to additional informational resources through Interlibrary Loan/System-Wide holds is provided through a variety of resources, including the Massachusetts Library System and C/W MARS.

The Trustees of the Sunderland Public Library adhere to the principles of the American Library Association's *Freedom to Read Statement* and the *Library Bill of Rights* for access to information for all users. The library serves people of all ages, beliefs and backgrounds. Many points of view on many issues are represented to allow people to form their own judgements. This means that the library may circulate materials whose manner of presentation may be offensive to some individuals. The library itself does not promote particular beliefs or views. Because responsibility for a child's reading and use of library materials rests with the parent/guardian and not with the library, children will have access to all library holdings, as will all patrons. Access to fragile or valuable materials is limited to use in the library, under staff supervision.

### **The Selection process**

The Board of Library Trustees formulates and sets library policy, including policy on collection development. The Library Director is responsible for the selection of materials under this policy and for all other aspects of collection development.

In general, selection is based on three factors:

- Community interest and demand.
- The individual merit of each title.
- The library's budget and existing collection.

Library staff use the American Library Association publication *Booklist* as a primary selection tool, frequently consulting other professional and publishing review materials as well. Some materials are examined first hand through visits from sales representatives or preview boxes. All patron requests for materials will be considered and titles will be purchased if there is sufficient demand, if the budget allows and if the materials meet a need in the collection. Donated materials will be accepted at the

discretion of library staff and with the stipulation that if the library cannot use the materials, they will be discarded or given to the Friends of the Sunderland Public Library for their Book Sales.

All selections, both purchased and donated, must meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Author's authority – the reputation and/or significance of the author.
- Author's competence – the skill of the author; clarity, accuracy and logic of factual presentation; vitality and originality of thought; artistic excellence in presentation.
- Quality of the physical format – bindings, durability, technical quality of audiovisual formats.
- Permanent value – source material or a record of the times.
- Public interest – significant interest of critics and the public.
- Relation to existing resources – the need to maintain a balanced collection, including accurate, current information and an even representation of minority views.

Fiction: The library seeks to provide a wide selection of fiction of current popular interest in a variety of styles and genres, and a reasonable selection of older titles of recurrent interest or special literary merit, for our Adult, Young Adult and Juvenile Fiction collections. A variety of formats are available, including regular print, large print, paperbacks, audio books, and videos. Excellence of illustration is an important criteria for selection of children's materials, both fiction and nonfiction.

Nonfiction: The library selects according to accuracy, currency and representation of various viewpoints. These criteria apply to both our adult collection (which includes material for young adults) and our juvenile collection. Areas of high demand are represented in greater variety and numbers than the areas of low demand.

Reference: The library seeks to provide a collection of basic reference tools, relying on the resources of the Massachusetts Library system and C/W MARS for more specialized reference works. Accuracy, currency, comprehensiveness and ease of use are the primary criteria for selection.

Periodicals: The library selects a variety of popular magazines to fill the need for recreational as well as informational reading. Criteria for selection are representation of community interest, attractiveness of format and accuracy of information. Back issues are kept for one year and use of these is facilitated by Massachusetts Library System Supplied databases.

### **Weeding and discarding**

In order to maintain a balanced, useful, attractive and interesting collection, materials are regularly discarded from the shelves. Criteria for weeding include physical condition, accuracy and currency of information, circulation history and usefulness of material in relation to other materials in the collection. Materials no longer consistent with the purposes and objectives of the library will be discarded. Discarded materials are donated to the Friends of the Sunderland Public Library for use in fundraising to benefit the library unless the materials are in such poor condition that they cannot be used or if they contain information that may be harmful (e.g. inaccurate medical information).

### **Reconsideration of materials**

The library will reconsider the inclusion of materials in our collection at patron request, provided the patron has filled out a Request for Consideration of Materials form provided by the library.

Reconsideration will be on the basis of the selection criteria outlined above; the decision of the Board of Trustees on the basis of these criteria and with the recommendations of the Library Director will be final.