

Materials Selection Policy

The purpose of the Materials Selection Policy is to articulate the collection goals and objectives of the Foley Public Library.

Policy Statement:

The Foley Public Library selects, acquires, and provides free and open access to appropriate materials regardless of format. As technology advances and the Foley community changes and develops, the Foley Public Library will be both a physical resource and a "virtual" presence in the lives of each and every Foley resident. The library strives to meet the current requirements of the community and to anticipate future needs.

Responsibility for Selection:

Though the overall responsibility for the collection rests with the Foley Public Library's leadership, the responsibility for selecting and retaining materials is delegated to qualified and knowledgeable staff who employ the criteria outlined in this policy. The final responsibility for materials selection and retention resides with the Library Director.

Objective of the Library's Collections:

The objective of the Foley Public Library is to collect, organize, and make easily available to the people of the community materials which will help them in the pursuit of education, information, and the creative use of leisure time. Within the limits of space and budget, the collection offers patrons materials in a choice of format, treatment, and level of difficulty. In this way, most individual library needs can be met and service provided to individuals of all ages.

Within the community of Foley, there are groups and individuals with diverse interests, backgrounds, and needs. The library collection reflects, as closely as possible, the interests of the majority while not neglecting the equally important interests and views of minorities within the local, national, and international communities. The library's role is to provide materials that will allow individuals to access information to make their own decisions.

It should be recognized that some materials chosen may be offensive, shocking, or boring to some individuals, but may be meaningful and significant to others. It is the responsibility of individuals to limit their library use to books and materials which are consistent with their individual tastes. While everyone is free to reject for themselves

and their children's materials of which they do not approve, they may not restrict the freedom of others to read or inquire.

The inclusion of an item in the collection is not to be considered an endorsement, official or otherwise, by the library. The library neither approves nor disapproves the views expressed in materials included in the collection. The library cannot exclude all materials that could conceivably result in mental or physical injury to some individual, since, theoretically, any material could be harmful to someone if improperly used.

The Community:

The prime community factors that have a direct bearing upon the selection of materials are (a) the people, individually and collectively, and (b) the adequacy and availability of materials through other community institutions.

A. The People of Foley

The Foley Public Library serves dynamic and diverse populations of almost 25,000 people. Our community has enormous shared needs, both expressed and unexpressed. The variety and scope of materials required for information, relaxation, stimulation, and education are as broad and strong as the community itself. The library will continually search for new and better methods and materials in multiple formats and languages to meet these needs.

B. Availability of Other Community Resources

The library cooperates as fully as possible with other libraries, community agencies, and educational institutions whose purposes and activities are related to library objectives. Expanding techniques of interlibrary loans on a city, county, state, and federal level are utilized to improve service to Foley Public Library patrons. In order to avoid unnecessary duplication of materials, the library considers the kinds of materials collected and available through other community institutions.

Methods and Criteria for Selection:

Libraries have the responsibility to be inclusive not exclusive in selection, and efforts are made to represent the widest possible diversity of views. Each type of material will be considered in terms of its own kind of excellence and for whom it is intended. There is no single standard that can be applied in all cases. Some materials may be judged primarily in terms of artistic merit, scholarship, or their value as human documents; others are selected to satisfy the recreational and entertainment needs of the community.

A. Methods

The library uses the criteria below in selecting materials for the Foley community based on knowledge of the diverse needs of the entire community and the contents of the library's entire collection. No materials are excluded or removed from the library on the basis of race, nationality, sexual orientation, political, social, or religious beliefs. Materials are judged as entire works, not on isolated passages or sections. Gifts offered to the library are evaluated using the same criteria. Suggestions from patrons are encouraged and will be given due consideration.

In selecting library materials for children, the library's objective is to provide a collection that meets the informational, recreational, and cultural needs of children from preschool age through sixth grade. However, resources of the entire Library are accessible to them as the need arises. Selection of adult material will not be restricted by the possibility that these materials may come into the possession of minors.

The collection contains materials that express a wide variety of views and are suitable for all ages and abilities. It is, therefore, the responsibility of parents or legal guardians to guide the reading, viewing, and listening choices of their children and young adults, and to decide what their children may or may not use from this collection.

B. Criteria

All Library selection and acquisitions choices are made in terms of the following standards:

1. Public interest or demand
2. Relevance to the community
3. Contemporary significance
4. Enduring value
5. Readability and style
6. Treatment of subject for intended audience
7. Physical durability, and attractiveness
8. Suitability of the format for library use
9. Creative, literary, or technical quality
10. Cost and availability
11. Reviews in the professional journals
12. Reviews in popular media
13. Professional or literary reputation of the author, publisher or producer
14. Circulation of similar material
15. Relation to existing collection and other materials on the subject.

Collection Maintenance and Evaluation:

Library materials are continuously assessed for their condition, accuracy, currency, and performance within the context of the total library collection, as well as for their continuing relevance to library users. The withdrawal of materials is a formal process conducted by knowledgeable staff as a necessary method to maintain collection vitality, size, and scope.

Reconsideration of Materials:

If a member of the community should raise a question about the appropriateness of a particular item in the collection, library staff attempts to resolve the inquiry by a review of the criteria outlined within this Materials Selection Policy. If the individual is not satisfied with this first step response, the individual may then elect to submit a **REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIAL form** available online on the Foley Library website.

Library leadership considers each request in terms of the criteria outlined in this Materials Selection Policy. The materials review is provided in a timely, well-considered response to every request for reconsideration. The final responsibility for materials reconsideration resides with the Director of the Library.