

# AURORA PUBLIC LIBRARY MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY

## **INTRODUCTION**

Recognizing the advisability of a well-defined policy outlining the Aurora Public Library's selection of books and other library materials, this policy is intended to guide and direct the selection and purchase of all library materials which are made available to the library's patrons. "Materials" shall include, but not be limited to, all print and non-print media: books, periodicals, books on CD, DVD's, computer programs and databases, and multimedia kits.

## **MISSION OF THE AURORA PUBLIC LIBRARY**

The Aurora Public Library reflects the interests and concerns of the community by supporting the development of early literacy, offering programs and materials to encourage the celebration and understanding of our rich cultural heritage, and providing individuals with a variety of materials and programs to support and increase their desire to read and view for pleasure.

## **RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION OF MATERIAL**

The Library Board vests responsibility for selection of library materials in the Director. Selections made within the guidelines of this policy shall be considered Board selections, and the Board shall assume full legal responsibility for such selections.

## **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

The library shall provide materials in all subject areas and in varied formats, print and non-print. Emphasis shall be placed on those areas of demonstrated local and regional interest, but not to the exclusion of materials on any subject.

Among the specific criteria to be considered are:

1. Reputation of the author
2. Reputation of the publisher or producer
3. Significance of the subject to the region
4. Evaluations of reviews
5. Format
6. Relation to existing collection

As a general practice, works of known quality and authorship will be considered. However, works of emerging and lesser-known writers and creative persons will be identified and acquired especially in the case of local and regional artists and authors.

In selecting materials, the Director shall be guided by, but not restricted to, a number of standard library reviewing aids.

In addition, suggestions and requests from other librarians and members of the public will be considered.

## **CONTROVERSIAL MATERIALS**

In seeking to accomplish its stated mission through this policy, the Aurora Public Library subscribes to the following paragraphs of the *Library Bill of Rights*:

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

Recognizing that we live in a varied and multi-cultural society and in a complex and fast moving age, the Aurora Public Library selects its materials from a broad spectrum of subjects, interests, points of view, and tastes. Some selections may be unpopular with some library patrons, but we accept the responsibility set forth in the *Library Bill of Rights* and expanded upon by the *Freedom to Read Statement*, Article 2:

“Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.”

Questions and debate are healthy and desirable to a free society; therefore, Aurora Public Library will vigorously resist censorious pressure and other attempts to force removal of materials from its collection. Patrons objecting to materials in the collection will be invited to state their concerns in writing and the complaint will be handled in accordance with “*Procedures for Handling Patron Complaints about Library Materials*.”

## **CHILDREN’S MATERIALS**

Aurora Public Library shall apply the same principles and criteria to the selection of children’s materials as to materials selected for adults. We shall strive to acquire books and other media of high quality for children, but “librarians and governing bodies cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority on the private relationship between parent and child.” We will not act to restrict the reading, listening, or viewing of any piece of materials acquired within the guidelines of this policy. This position, set forth in two American Library Association statements, “Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors” and “Restricted Access to Library Materials,” is that, “parents—and only parents—have the right and responsibility to restrict children—and only their children—to library resources.

## **PROCEDURES**

Gifts and donations: The Library Board authorizes the acceptance of unconditional gifts and donations to the library. Gifts with special conditions or stipulations can only be accepted with the approval of the Library Board. We will apply the same standards to gift materials as to those acquired by purchase.

Textbooks and curricular materials: Instructional materials may be acquired only if they are of interest to the general public. We will not acquire texts and curricular materials as such.

Special Collections: Recognizing the popularity of its various special collections, Aurora Public Library will strive to provide and maintain collections on a variety of topics in various formats. We recognize that there is a special interest in material on local, county, and state history. A broad view will be taken of works by and about Minnesota authors as well as general works relating to the state of Minnesota. We are, however, under no obligation to purchase all such materials.

Collection maintenance and weeding: Library staff shall maintain a program of regular review and weeding of its collection.

## **PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH CHALLENGED MATERIALS**

A patron expressing concern over library materials will be invited to discuss his or her concern with the Director and, if he or she wishes, to put the complaint in writing on the *Statement of Concern About Library Resources*. The Director and staff will then review the request and the facts in accordance with internal procedures, and will notify the complainant of the decision in writing. If the complainant is not satisfied with the administrative decision, he or she may request to appear before the Library Board for reconsideration. The Library Board decision shall be final.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Aurora Public Library hereby adopts the *Library Bill of Rights; The Freedom to Read Statement; Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors; Restricted Access to Library Materials, Access to Library Services Regardless of Sex, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, or Sexual Orientation; Statement of Concern About Library Resources*, and *Procedures for Handling Patron Complaints About Library Materials* (all of which are located in the Appendices) as part of its selection policy.

Adopted by the Aurora Public Library Board May 22, 2007, reaffirmed 8/19/10, 9/12/13, 9/27/16; revised 9/19/19