Collection Development/Materials Selection Policy

Purpose:

The Purpose of the Highland Public Library is to provide access to a broad collection of materials in a variety of media that communicate experience and ideas from one person to another. The library’s function is to assemble, preserve and make easily available to all people in the Highland Central School District print and non-print materials that will assist them in their daily lives and provide them with a reservoir of knowledge; to offer guidance and encouragement in their use; and to provide the community with access to reliable and easily available sources of information and reference. This service is provided on a fair and equitable basis to all individuals and groups of every age, sex, education, religion, philosophy, occupation, economic level, ethnic origin and human condition.

Due to the volume of resources as well as budget and space limitations, the library must have a selection policy with which to meet the interests and needs of the community in order to fulfill its objectives.

This Collection Development Policy is used by the library staff in the selection of materials and also serves to acquaint the general public with the principles of selection.

The Library adopts as official policy the most recent American Library Association and New York Library Association “Freedom to Read”, “Freedom to View” and “Library Bill of Rights” statements.

A. Objectives of Selection
   a. Selection shall be inclusive rather than exclusive and shall be determined by the particular need and interests of individuals and organizations in the Highland Central School District.
   b. Selection shall produce a balanced collection which emphasizes the Library’s educational, recreational and informational functions. Selected materials will aim to widen horizons, stimulate imagination and enlarge experience.
   c. Selection shall reflect the importance of basic materials of permanent value and materials on current issues.
   d. Selection shall attempt to incorporate all points of view or issues of public interest.

B. Selection Responsibility
   a. Responsibility for selection rests with the Library Director.
   b. Under the Library Director’s guidance such members of the professional staff who are qualified by reason of education and training may assist in the selection process.
   c. Recommendations and suggestions from Library staff and patrons are welcomed and considered.

C. Criteria for Selection
   The overall value of a book or other material type based on principles and judgment rather than prejudice and censorship, is the chief criterion of selection. Standard book selection aids are utilized in the process.
The following criteria serve as a basis for selection of all materials:
   a. Literary and artistic worth
   b. Suitability of content and vocabulary
   c. Format
   d. Authoritativeness
   e. Reputation and significance of author, illustrator, etc.
   f. Reputation of the publisher
   g. Importance of the subject matter to the collection.
   h. Scarcity of material on a subject.
   i. Timeliness or permanence
   j. Price
   k. Public interest or demand
   l. Contribution of the material to the balance of the total collection.

D. Gifts
The library believes that its collection can be greatly enriched by gifts, bequests and memorials. In accepting a gift the Library reserves the privilege of deciding whether it should be added to its collection. The library will make every effort to dispose of all gift materials which it does not add to the collection to the best advantage. A gift may:
   a. Be offered to other libraries
   b. Be sold and the money used to enhance the Library’s collections or program offerings.

E. Weeding and Replacement
1. It shall be the policy of the Library to regularly weed the collection. The purpose shall be to:
   a. Remove materials in poor condition.
   b. Remove materials containing outdated information.
   c. Remove materials no longer needed.

2. Need for replacement of a withdrawn item is considered in each case in relation to several factors:
   a. Existence of duplicate copies.
   b. Existence of adequate coverage in the subject area.
   c. Existence of demand for a specific title or subject.
   d. Existence of a replacement in comparable format.

F. Reconsideration
The Library recognizes that many materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons.
1. Selection of materials will not be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the basis of the principles stated in this policy.
2. Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of their contents and no library material will be sequestered.
3. Responsibility of the reading of children rests entirely with their parents or legal guardians. Selection of Library material will not be inhibited by the possibility that items may come into the possession of children.

4. Patrons requesting an item be withdrawn from the collection must complete a “Reconsideration of Library Materials” form obtained from the staff.
   a. The inquiry will be placed on the agenda of the next regular meeting of the Board of Trustees.
   b. The Board will review the material in question and make a determination. The decision of the Board will be final.