

The Bridgton Public Library subscribes fully to the American Library Association's FREEDOM TO READ and FREEDOM TO VIEW STATEMENTS, the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS, the INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM STATEMENT and the STATEMENT ON LABELING. The Bridgton Public Library adheres to the principles of freedom to read, view, or hear and declares that all materials selected under the Collection Development Policy are considered constitutionally protected.

Materials representing various points of view are acquired by the Bridgton Public Library. Selections are not made on the basis of any anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the work in regard to building balanced collections and serving the interests or needs of library patrons. Works are normally not excluded because of language or explicit text or illustrations if they meet the selection criteria stated in the Library's Collection Development Policy.

The Bridgton Public Library recognizes that many resources are controversial and that any given item may offend a library patron. The collection is designed to serve the whole community. The Library's selection process cannot be inhibited by the fact that children and young adults have access to the entire collection. Parents or guardians who wish to limit or restrict the use of resources (reading, listening, and viewing) by their own children should personally oversee their selections.

The choice of library materials by patrons is an individual matter. While individuals may reject materials for themselves, they cannot exercise censorship or restrict access to materials for others. The Library does not remove materials because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

Library patrons who wish to make a formal complaint regarding library resources should complete a "Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources" form. Once submitted to the Library Director, this form will be reviewed by the Library Director and the Board of Trustees.

A. Collection Selection Criteria

Materials in all formats are selected according to the following general criteria:

1. Patron interest or request
2. Need, balance of the collection, and/or relationship to other material in the collection
3. Quality (including accuracy, authority, and currency in the case of non-fiction; production quality in the case of audio-visual material; quality of illustration and reproduction in the case of picture books and art books, etc.)
4. Appropriateness of format
5. Cost
6. Professional judgment

B. Gifts, Donations, and Memorials

The Bridgton Public Library welcomes donations of materials, tangible objects, and funds. Gifts of tangible personal property and gifts of funds are covered under the library's Gift Acceptance Policy. Donated items will be carefully reviewed for their overall contributions to the Library's mission, service priorities, and relevance to the collection subject to the same criteria used for materials that are purchased. The library assumes immediate and unconditional ownership of all donated items. Gift items may not be reclaimed. Gift items will not be accepted with restrictions or conditions that necessitate special housing, processing, or treatment. The Library will not accept responsibility for notifying donors of withdrawal or replacement of gift items.

If requested, a receipt for tax purposes, indicating quantity and type of items, will be given to the donor at the time of donation. The Library cannot provide a value for donated items. Materials not selected for inclusion in the Library's collection may be offered to other organizations, or discarded, at the discretion of the Library Director.

Donated materials that are accepted into the Library's collection are subject to the same Library policies and procedures as purchased materials including classification, cataloging, processing, evaluation, repair, circulation, and discarding. Donated materials cannot be placed on special shelves or separated from other similar materials already in the Library's collection.

The Library welcomes monetary gifts to purchase materials in memory or in honor of an individual. Donors may suggest subject areas for memorial gifts; but, in accordance with this policy, the library staff will select individual titles. Memorial materials will be commemorated with a bookplate recognizing both the honoree and the donor and also acknowledged in writing.

C. Collection Maintenance

Procedures will be followed to maintain the quality and value of the collection including acquisition, repair, replacement, and discarding items as required. A summary of collection maintenance acquisitions and discards will be reported to the Board of Trustees annually.

If the library director has reason to suspect that books or other materials may have been removed from the library without authorization there will be an investigation. The library director will seek authorization from the Board to pursue notification of public authorities if their assistance is required. Written notification will be provided to the suspected party and library privileges revoked until the matter is resolved.

See also: Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources Form
Replaces: Protection of Library Materials Policy