



POLICY # 401 – Materials Selection
Approved by the Board of Trustees 4/14/2022

Policy Statement:

In the public interest, the Ruth Enlow Library materials collection has been designed and developed to allow the citizens of Garrett County to have the broadest possible access to materials. Since the Ruth Enlow Library cannot possibly acquire all available materials, the system must employ a selective acquisitions policy.

Regulations:

The library provides, within its available budget, a general collection of reliable materials embracing broad areas of knowledge. Works of enduring value and timely materials on current issues are both important components of the collection. Materials are purchased in the most appropriate format, based on the needs of the patron.

The Board of Trustees of the Ruth Enlow Library establishes the materials selection policy for the library system based on the library's mission and state legal findings. The Library Director is ultimately responsible for the selection of materials, and factors governing selection include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Patron requests
- Anticipated demand
- Branch staff requests
- Book reviews from professional publications
- Budgetary concerns
- Current relevance

Video materials will be selected based on the following factors:

- Significant box office performance
- Favorable reviews by reputable critics
- Proven current patron interest
- Media based on literary adaptations
- Great cultural significance or cult status
- Presence in National Film Registry
- Inclusion or nomination for nationally recognized awards
- Cost of media
- Library programming needs

Librarians involved in materials selection have a professional responsibility to select and support the access to materials on all subject areas that meet the needs of the community and to protect the library's collection from the removal of materials based on personal bias or prejudice. "It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group." In a free society, individuals and groups must be free to determine for themselves what they wish to read or view. No group or individual has the right to impose its own concepts of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. The Ruth Enlow Library adheres to the American Library Association's Freedom to Read statement.

However, there are occasions when particular materials are not suitable for inclusion in the library's collection (see policy on materials donations), or have become dated or invalid (see policy on weeding).

Materials challenges

All books in the library are not right for all readers, and the Library does not assume parental responsibility for children's reading choices. Public requests for materials and comments on the suitability of materials are welcome and encouraged (see request for reconsideration form, which is not a part of this document).

Challenges must identify specific passages that violate collection development policy. Patrons challenging an item must have read or viewed it in its entirety, and provide an exact explanation of their concern. Patrons challenging an item must also provide their name, contact information, and branch frequented.

Requests for consideration will be referred to the Director, who will consider each request individually. Questioned books will not be removed from circulation during the reconsideration process.

Appeal may be made to the Board of Trustees, who will consider each with an eye towards maintaining established Library values. Their decision will be considered final.

Books already challenged will not be reheard for a minimum of 5 years.