



KANAWHA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM

Collection Development Policy 2025

Abstract

Document to be used with established electronic and print tools to guide selectors and Technical Services in tailoring Patron Driven Acquisition materials in our communities.

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Mission and Vision Statements

Vision Statement

The Kanawha County Public Library cultivates exceptional services as the premier source of information in a community where learning and reading are revered and being well-informed is valued.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Kanawha County Public Library System is to provide free and equal access to information to all citizens, to provide job training and career development information that will prepare them for a competitive job market, to enrich individual and family lives through satisfying educational, recreational, and cultural experiences, to enable patrons to access new information technologies, to provide opportunities for lifelong learning, to serve as the center of community life.

Scope of Policy

The Kanawha County Public Library System's (KCPLS) collection is intended to meet the educational, informational, recreational, and cultural needs of its community through a wide variety of materials (print, non-print, and digital). The purpose of the Collection Development Policy is to establish and maintain a documented approach to collection management. Limits of space and budget make it necessary to define the collection with enough specificity so Collection Specialist (CS) Librarians can determine whether a title should be purchased and when materials should be weeded.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a written framework for the KCPLS' CS Librarians and approved material selectors, under the supervision of the Technical Services Librarian, to manage the purchase and disposition of library lending resources. This manual supports the library's mission, defines the purpose of the collections, and guides collections work throughout the library system.

While this policy does not replace the judgement of CS Librarians and material selectors, it does:

- Provide a written framework for planning, building, selecting, and maintaining the library
- system's information resources in a cost-effective and user-relevant manner.
- State priorities and indicate boundaries in choosing and evaluating materials that best meet the needs of the community.
- Provide the ability to use professional judgement within acceptable limits while balancing the
- library system's funding resources.
- Describe how materials are selected, evaluated, and maintained.
- Inform the public about principles of material selection and the ability to request the removal of materials.

Guidance Statements

The Kanawha County Public Library System's function is to connect our communities with information, ideas, and experiences for enjoyment and enrichment. Ultimate responsibility for materials selection and withdrawal rests with the Technical Services

Librarian who operates within the framework of the policies determined by the Library Director and the Library Board of Directors. The Director and Technical Services Librarian may delegate qualified staff with the responsibility of making selections.

This policy ensures that the library system's collection will reflect the needs of our communities, while creating unique experiences, fostering literacy, and introducing a variety of sources or formats. The Kanawha County Public Library Board has adopted these additional statements and principals set forth by the American Library Association, and they are used as guidelines for all library system material selected by CS Librarians.

Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- 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.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.
- VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

Intellectual Freedom

The Kanawha County Public Library supports intellectual freedom, freedom of inquiry, freedom of expression, freedom to view, and the free exchange of ideas as expressed in the ***American Library Association Bill of Rights*** and the ***American Library Association Intellectual Freedom to Read and Freedom to View Statements***. In our selection process, all points of view will be considered without prejudice or censorship. No materials or resources will be censored solely because of personal objection to the author's use of language, stance, sex, sexual orientation, religion, political philosophy, personal history, personal persuasion, affiliation, or national origin; likewise, materials will not be censored based solely on a personal dislike of or distaste for the subject matter. Care will be taken to ensure that the collection reflects diverse viewpoints. Materials and resources selected will be readily available to all library users.

Community Profiles

The Kanawha County Public Library System defines its primary service area as the residents of Kanawha County, and secondly, citizens of West Virginia through established eligibility circulation policies. See Appendix A.

Criteria for Technical Services

Responsibility for Selection

Responsibility for selection of library materials ultimately belongs to CS Librarians who follow the criteria for selection. The CS Librarians have the authority to reject any material request from designated system selectors or patrons that are deemed unfit for purchase. The Lead Collection Specialist Librarian will provide training for selecting materials and collection training documents for staff to access.

General Criteria

Materials are selected based on public demand, usage statistics, and relevance of materials to the communities served directly by the library system. The library system provides professional tools for selectors to monitor and assess the health of the system collection, to make informed choices on new and changing resources, and thoughtful determination on the removal of library resources.

Collections are shaped, in part, by patron use through an exchanged collection. Items move freely among library locations, rather than being bound to a specific location. The collection includes multiple formats and represents the diverse viewpoints and interests of the communities the library system serves.

Materials for children and teenagers are intended to broaden their vision, support recreational reading, encourage, and facilitate reading skills, supplement their educational needs, stimulate and widen their interests, lead to recognition and appreciation of literature and reflect the diversity of the community. The reading and viewing activity of children is ultimately the responsibility of parents and/or legal guardians, who guide and oversee their own children's development. The Library does not intrude on that relationship. Selectors use multiple resources to select a variety of diverse high-quality materials to encourage and facilitate reading skills on a multitude of levels. Selectors also choose current-interest materials.

Evaluation Criteria

- Public demand and anticipated demand
- Relevance to the interest and needs of the community
- Attention to critics and reviewers, award winners, or inclusion in bibliographies
- Significance, timeliness, or permanence of subject matter
- Relevance and suitability of physical format
- Representation of diverse viewpoints
- Relevance to early literacy
- Literary merit and contribution to the field of knowledge
- Relationship to the existing collection

- Suitability and style for intended audience, reputation or qualifications of the author, creator, or publisher
- Value of the resource in relation to its cost
- Condition of material
- Availability of content through the Internet, subscription databases

Scope of the Main Library

The Main Library contains the core fiction and nonfiction collections for the library system and includes materials of an enduring nature as well as current-interest materials. The Main Library collections include information in multiple formats and represent the diverse viewpoints and interests of the community the library serves.

Scope of the Branch Libraries

The branch libraries serve the needs of the communities in which they are located. Selectors regularly evaluate the collection to ensure its relevance. Collections of the branch libraries concentrate on materials of high interest and materials that support the library's strategic goals. Branch collections are shaped, in part, by customer use through an exchanged collection system. Items move freely among library locations rather than being bound to a specific location.

Scope of the Bookmobile / Outreach Services

The bookmobile and outreach services focus on popular materials. The emphasis is on collecting current, timely materials to satisfy popular demand rather than creating comprehensive collections intended for in-depth research.

Scope of the Online Collection

The online collection represents the diverse viewpoints and interests of the entire community the library serves. This collection includes periodical and educational databases, eBooks and other downloadable and streaming media, and instructional programs. With the increased production of and reliance on electronic resources, the library is committed to meet the demands with sustained effort to identify and acquire them. Examples of electronic formats include but are not limited to: downloaded or streaming e-journals, e-books, e-audiobooks, e-videos, and e-music.

Patron Recommendations

The collection is driven by patron demand. Patron Driven Acquisition emphasizes patron use and purchase suggestions as the most powerful influence on the library system's collection. Patrons may request items if the library does not own them. Each request is reviewed and given highest priority for inclusion in the collection if they meet the selecting criteria. All requests not meeting the selecting criteria for purchase will be pursued through Interlibrary Loan. Suggestions from patrons and staff are highly encouraged to give direction to CS Librarians as they develop the collection. In addition, CS Librarians will make every possible effort to routinely review data and metrics generated by the circulation of library materials to inform them of how to develop the collection. Ideally, PDA will help the library purchase materials guaranteed to circulate and decrease purchases that are "dead on arrival," in turn, saving money.

Special Collections

Donations

The library system will accept gifts to be added to the collection with the understanding they meet the same standards as purchased materials. No conditions may be imposed on the library relating to the donated materials after they have been accepted by the library, and all donated materials shall become the exclusive property of the library. The library reserves the right to determine the suitability of donated materials and dispose of gifts not suitable for library use.

The library system does not have staff with the expertise to value any donated materials. Therefore, the library system can only acknowledge the fact that items were donated without the assigning of values. Donations given to the library for purchases of memorial/honor materials are welcomed. A donor may suggest the subject field and library location in which the material will be located.

Government Documents

KCPL has been designated as a selective United States Depository Library acquiring without charge only those categories of federal government documents which it has indicated for acceptance. Selected local and state documents will also be added to the collection.

Interlibrary Loan

The library cannot purchase all materials that are requested. Therefore, Interlibrary Loan will be used to borrow materials from other libraries to meet our patrons' needs.

Local and State History Collections

KCPL acknowledges the responsibility to preserve and collect materials concerning state and local history. The library will acquire and preserve community, local, and state historical materials.

Collection Management

The library system's collection is a living, changing entity. As items are added, others are reviewed using software collection tools for their ongoing value and are sometimes withdrawn from the collection.

Decisions are influenced by patterns of use, the capacity of each location, and the holdings of other libraries that may specialize in a specific subject matter. The Technical Services Librarian reviews the collection regularly to maintain its vitality and usefulness to the community.

The library disposes of materials that have been withdrawn according to the criteria for weeding and withdrawal outlined below. The West Virginia Book Festival serves as an instrument for the library system, reselling and redistributing library materials that are withdrawn from the collection or donated to the library and designated by the library for resale.

Criteria for Weeding and Withdrawal

The following criteria are used in selecting materials for withdrawal:

- Not circulating in three years (with some exceptions)
- Damage or poor condition
- Number of copies in the collection
- Relevance to the needs and interest of the community
- Current demand and frequency of use
- Accuracy and timeliness
- Local interest
- Availability elsewhere including other libraries and online

Preservation

Certain types of materials require activities to extend the physical life of the item or to retain the intellectual content. Decisions for preservation recognize that not all items need to be given the same level of care, security, and attention. In addition to the criteria outlined above under Collection Management, library staff use the following criteria when evaluating an item for preservation:

- Cost (includes value of the item and preservation expense)
- Intellectual content
- Intrinsic value
- Significance/uniqueness of item to the collection
- Storage/environmental capabilities

Request for Reconsideration

The choice of library materials by users is an individual matter. While a person may reject materials for themselves or their children, they cannot exercise censorship to restrict access to the materials by others.

It is the belief of the Library Board of Directors that the library has a right and a duty to keep on its shelves a representative selection of materials on subjects of interest representing all sides of controversial topics. Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of their contents. No library material will be sequestered except to protect it from damage or theft.

In addition, KCPL will develop and purchase a collection that will benefit the broad spectrum of its service community. This will include, but is not limited to, serving the needs of adults, young adults, and children in their unique ways. The responsibility for children and young adults' exposure to library materials rests with their parents and/or legal guardians, and the Library assumes no responsibility for controlling the access of children to the entire collection of the Library.

Consistent with governing law, the Library will process all requests for reconsideration of materials in the following manner listed below.

Eligibility

Library patrons who have held a library card for at least thirty (30) days are eligible to submit a formal, written *Request for Reconsideration*. Anonymous or incomplete request forms will not be accepted. Other criteria for eligibility include:

- Request forms must be signed by the individual patron.
- A separate request form must be submitted for each library material, library resource, program, exhibition, or display.
- No more than thirty (30) request forms may be submitted in one calendar year by any individual patron.
- Library material will only be reviewed once every three (3) years. Prior decisions concerning the particular material will be included and considered in any new reconsideration request form which is filed.
- Request forms may be delivered or mailed to:
 - Library Director
Kanawha County Public Library
123 Capitol Street
Charleston, WV 25301

Procedure

Initiation of Formal Requests for Reconsideration

Library patrons may initiate complaints about specific titles or types of materials in the library's collection by communicating their request to any member of the staff, the Director, or a member of the Board of Directors. Such communications are considered *informal complaints*. Upon initiation of an informal complaint by a patron, the staff, Director, or Board member who has been contacted will orally offer the complainant a *Request for Reconsideration* form (appended to this policy) and will orally inform the patron of the *formal complaint procedure* set forth in this policy. No further action is to be taken by staff, the Director, or a member of the Board until a formal, written *Request for Reconsideration* form is completed and filed with the Library Director. Additionally, no further action will be taken until the challenged material is available at the library (not checked out).

The formal procedure commences once a *Request for Reconsideration* form is received. The Library Director will send a letter of acknowledgment to the complainant and enclose copies of this Policy and the Collection Development Policy. The request is considered a personal matter involving the complaining patron. If other patrons, members of the public, or the press inquire about the status of a specific *Request for Reconsideration*, all such inquiries will be forwarded to and addressed by the Library Director.

Evaluation of Challenged Material by Special Committee

After receipt of the formal request, the Library Director will randomly select three (3) professional librarians as a special committee to evaluate the challenged material cited in the request. Members of the evaluation committee will read, listen to, or view the challenged material in its entirety; look at the material in relationship to the library's Collection Development Policy and in relationship to the rest of the entire collection of the Library; and research and consider the opinions of literary critics, commentators, and reviewers as they pertain to the material. After completing their individual reviews, members of the evaluation committee will meet to discuss the challenged material and make a written recommendation to the Library Director which may include:

- retaining the challenged material in the collection,
- retaining the challenged material but moving it to another more appropriate location in the collection,

- withdrawing the challenged material from the collection, or
- taking other appropriate action.

Decision of Library Director

Upon receipt and consideration of the evaluation committee's recommendation, the Library Director will render a written decision concerning the challenged material in accordance with the policies of the library and applicable law, setting forth an explanation of the reasons for the decision, and the written decision will be delivered to the complainant. The written decision will also describe the procedures available to appeal to the Library Director's decision to the Library's Board of Directors. Until the decision of the Library Director is made, the challenged material will remain available for use by all other patrons.

Appeal of Decision to the Board

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the decision, the complainant may appeal to the Library Board of Directors within thirty (30) days of receipt of the decision. To initiate an appeal to the Board, the complainant must file a written request of appeal to the Library Director within thirty (30) days of the Library Director's decision. Upon receipt of a timely-filed request of appeal by the complainant, the Library Director will have the matter placed on the agenda of the next scheduled meeting of the Public Service Committee of the Board of Directors for a hearing. The Library Director shall acknowledge in writing receipt of the appeal from the complainant and shall include a notice of the schedule of the Committee and Board meetings at which the matter will be placed on the agenda for consideration. If the complainant fails to appeal in writing to the Board of Directors within thirty (30) days of the Library Director's decision, the decision will be deemed final. It is provided, however, that the complainant or other eligible patron may initiate another informal or formal request for reconsideration of the material in accordance with this policy.

At the hearing of the Public Service Committee, the Committee will review the written decision of the Library Director, will review all recommendations and documents of the evaluation committee, receive and consider any additional documents or evidence relevant to the matter not previously considered, and make a recommendation to the Board of Directors which will be presented at the Board's next regularly-scheduled meeting.

At the meeting of the Board of Directors, the Board will decide by a majority vote of the members present to accept or reject the recommendation of the Public Service Committee or to take other appropriate action including setting the matter for an expanded public hearing.

Expanded Public Hearing

If the Board of Directors sets the appeal for an expanded public hearing, the matter will be scheduled at a regular Board meeting or at a special Board meeting set for that purpose only, as the Board may direct. Proper notice of the public hearing on the appeal will be made. The Library Director will mail an individual notice to the complainant and will issue a news release to inform the public of the date, time, and nature of the public hearing. The President of the Board of Directors will chair the public hearing. In the President's absence, the Vice-President will assume this responsibility. After calling the meeting to order, the Chair will summarize the procedural history of the request for reconsideration of the challenged material including all prior recommendations and decisions and will establish the procedures to be followed at the meeting. The Chair will announce at the beginning of the meeting that it is a hearing for the

purpose of hearing all sides of the issue and that the decision on the appeal will be issued at the Board's next regularly scheduled meeting. Members of the public wishing to make comments shall sign in and register on which side they intend to speak. Speakers will speak in the order they register. To efficiently run the meeting, the Chair may decide whether to set time limits. If time limits are set, a timekeeper shall be appointed by the Chair and each speaker will be limited to a specific amount of time. No participant will be allowed to speak in rebuttal or a second time until all registered speakers have been heard, if time is available.

Board's Decision on Challenged Material

After the conclusion of the expanded hearing, final action on the appeal of the challenged material will be placed on the agenda at the next regular meeting of the Board. The Board's final decision will be made upon motion and announced publicly at this open meeting. A majority of the vote of the members present shall be required to remove materials from the library's collection, to move materials from one collection to another, or to otherwise restrict access to materials. After a final decision by the Board, the materials may not be reconsidered for three (3) years from the date of the decision.

Appendix A: Kanawha County, WV Demographics

As of July 1, 2019¹

Total population estimate – 178,124

Age and Sex

Persons under 5 years (percent) - 5.2% Persons
under 18 years (percent) - 20.0% Persons 65
years and over (percent) - 21.2% Median Age –
43.3²

Female persons (percent) - 51.8%

Male persons (percent) - 48.2%

Race and Hispanic Origin

White (not Hispanic or Latino) – 87.7% Black
or African America – 7.6%

American Indian and Alaska Native – 0.2%

Asian – 1.1%

Two or More Races – 2.5%

Hispanic or Latino – 1.2%

Economics

Poverty Status – 17.1% live below poverty line (31,200 in 2018)³ Median

Household Income - \$47,759⁴

¹ U.S. Census Bureau (2019). *QuickFacts*. Retrieved from QuickFacts: Kanawha County, West Virginia page from <<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/kanawhacountywestvirginia>>

² U.S. Census Bureau (2019). *American Community Survey 1-year estimates*. Retrieved from *Census Reporter Profile page for Kanawha County, WV* <<http://censusreporter.org/profiles/05000US54039-kanawha-county-wv/>>

³ DataUSA (2018). *DataUSA*. Retrieved from Kanawha County, WV page <<https://datausa.io/profile/geo/kanawha-county-wv>>

U.S. Census Bureau (2019). *American Community Survey 1-year estimates*. Retrieved from *Census Reporter Profile page for Kanawha County, WV* <<http://censusreporter.org/profiles/05000US54039-kanawha-county-wv/>>