

DAKOTA CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

The Role of the Library in the Community:

The role of the Dakota City Public Library is to actively provide for the educational, informational, recreational, and cultural needs of the residents of Dakota City by selecting, acquiring, organizing, preserving and making available our materials and services. We seek to foster an atmosphere of free inquiry and to provide information without bias or discrimination. We cooperate with other agencies and institutions in an effort to enhance and expand public awareness and access to information. We have the responsibility to uphold the principles of freedom of expression and the public's "right to know."

Materials Selection Policy:

The public library is the institution in our society that attempts to provide a diversity of viewpoints on a wide range of topics of interest, including political, social and religious, no matter how controversial or objectionable those ideas may be to some people. Because of this, the Dakota City Public Library chooses materials representing different points of view, limited only by our selection criteria, budget and the space in our facilities.

We support the Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read Statement, and the Freedom to View Statement in providing free and open access to our materials for all age groups. Children are not restricted to a particular area of the library. Our staff does not monitor the materials that children choose. The responsibility for the reading and/or viewing choices of children rests entirely with parents or legal guardians.

In considering which materials to place in the Library, we will not automatically include or exclude an item based on any of the following criteria:

- Race, religion, nationality or political views of an author
- Frankness or coarseness of language
- Controversial nature of an item
- Endorsement or disapproval of an item by an individual or organization in the community

We judge each book or other type of material on the basis of its overall content or style, not by isolated or random portions.

How We Decide What to Buy:

The librarian is responsible for the selection of materials within assigned categories and uses the Materials Selection Policy in choosing what to buy. The librarian consults various sources to determine the value of the material to the collection.

The following criteria are considered when selecting materials:

- Reviews from professional journals, popular magazines and newspapers;
- Expressed or anticipated patron demand;
- Timeliness or permanence of the material;
- Quality, accuracy or authenticity of materials;
- Inclusion if materials in a special bibliography or index;
- Scope and depth of our present collection or the availability of materials at other libraries;
- Reputation or authority of the author or publisher;
- Format and price of material as well as space available to house it;
- Appropriateness to the interests and skills of the intended user.

No single criterion is used to justify a purchase: the librarian considers all the criteria in reaching a decision.

How You Can Have a Say:

Suggestions and donations from people in the community are encouraged and are given serious consideration. We want to hear from you and will let you know whether or not we can buy or accept the material. All material added to our collection by suggestion or gift must meet the same criteria as ordinarily used in choosing items.

From time to time, a person may be concerned about a particular book or other material in the Library. If a person wants us to reconsider material that is in our collection, a Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form may be requested from the staff. This form should be filled out and returned to the librarian. The Request for Reconsideration will be reviewed by the Library Board and a written response regarding the board's decision will be mailed to the requesting party within 30 days of the receipt of the Request for Reconsideration.

Intellectual Freedom Statements:

The heritage of freedom is ours. In the Bill of Rights to the United States Constitution, the founders of our nation proclaimed certain fundamental freedoms to be essential to our form of government. Primary among these is the freedom of expression, specifically the right to publish diverse opinions and the right to

unrestricted access to those opinions. As citizens committed to full and free use of all communications media and as professional persons responsible for making the content of those media accessible to all without prejudice, we wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of freedom of expression.

Through continuing judicial interpretations of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, full freedom of expression has been guaranteed. Every American who aspires to the success of our experiment in democracy—who has faith in the political and social integrity of free men—must stand firm on those Constitutional guarantees of essential rights. Such Americans can be expected to fulfill the responsibilities implicit in those rights.

Therefore, we include in our policies the following documents: The Library Bill of Rights, The Freedom to Read Statement, and The Freedom to View Statement, all of which are endorsed by the American Library Association.

Children and the Library:

Your child is the proud owner of a library card, a passport to an exciting world of adventure. With it, your child can journey to every country in this world—and out-of-this-world too! Your child can visit yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

We have a parent and family collection just for you; feel free to browse our books on parenting, discipline, child development, nutrition, health and more.

As parent or guardian, you are responsible for what your child reads and for materials checked out on your child's library card. Being a library cardholder is an excellent chance for your child to learn about responsibility: how to choose what to read, making sure library materials are returned on time and paying fines when materials are overdue. We hope you become involved with your child's library experience; you'll find it rewarding for you and for your child.

The Dakota City Public Library makes a broad selection of library materials and information available for everyone, including children and teenagers.

We have special areas for children and teens with materials that appeal to various ages and interests. We also offer a summer reading program, story times and other special programs for young people. Programs such as these help young people learn to enjoy libraries and use them for their information and entertainment needs.

Our librarian seeks materials that will provide a broad range of viewpoints and subject matter. Consequently, while our collection has thousands of items families want, like and need; it also may have materials that some parents may find offensive to them or inappropriate for their children.

Libraries must meet the diverse needs of everyone in their community. They cannot overrule the rights and responsibilities of individuals by deciding who does or doesn't have access to library materials. Decisions about what materials are suitable for particular children should be made by the people who know them best – the parents or guardians.

Children mature at different rates. They have different backgrounds and interests, and they have different reading levels and abilities. For instance, one parent may feel a particular library material is inappropriate for his child, while the same book may be a favorite of that child's classmate's family. These factors make it impossible for librarians to set any criteria by restricting use based on age alone. To do so would keep others who want and need materials from having access to them.

Like adults, children and teenagers have the right to seek and receive the information that they choose. It is the right and responsibility of parents/guardians to guide their own family's library use while allowing other parents/guardians to do the same.

Parents should discuss rules regarding library use with their children. If you are concerned they will not respect your wishes, it is your responsibility to visit the library with them.

Librarians are not authorized to act as parents, but they are happy to provide suggestions and guidance to parents and youngsters at any time.

This policy adapted from the Springfield-Greene County Library, Springfield, Missouri.

Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

Dakota City Public Library

We appreciate your concerns and welcome your comments. If you would like a written response, please include the following information and return this form to the librarian or staff member.

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

1. What kind of material are you commenting on? (e.g. book, video, magazine, etc.)

2. Please provide the following information on this material:

Title _____

Author _____

Copyright date _____ Publisher _____

3. Please describe what you find objectionable. (be specific, citing page numbers, etc.)

4. Have you read, viewed or listened to the entire work? If not, what parts?

5. Would you recommend this material for a different age group or location? If so, please specify which age group or location.

6. Can you suggest other material to take its place?