Collection Development and Maintenance Policy

The Kent Memorial Library aims to fulfill its mission through judicious collection development practices that address the needs and interests of the growing and diverse community of Suffield. This collection development policy defines our goals and provides guidance to library staff and the public for the selection, curation, organization and de-selection of physical, electronic, and digital library materials, so as to meet the current and future needs of the community, in accordance with Public Act 25-168, Sec. 322 & 323.

Mission Statement:

The Kent Memorial Library is dedicated to serving the community by providing learning resources and information services that support and improve individual, family, and community life.

Intellectual Freedom and Censorship:

The Library recognizes the importance of the public library as a place for voluntary inquiry, the dissemination of information and ideas, and the promotion of free expression and free access to ideas by residents. In order to uphold public trust, the Library prioritizes the representation of a wide range of varied and diverging viewpoints in the collection as a whole. All library materials are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in section 46a-64 of the general statutes, including, but not limited to, discrimination based on race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability. The Library is prohibited by state statutes from removing, excluding or censoring any book on the sole basis that an individual finds such book offensive.

The Library is guided by the principles of intellectual freedom adopted by the American Library Association as expressed in its Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, and Freedom to View statements.

Responsibility of Selecting Library Materials:

The Library Commission delegates the oversight and management of the collection, within the guidelines of this policy, to the Library Director and librarians who are professionally trained to curate and develop a collection that provides access to the widest array of library and other educational materials.

Responsibility for the selection, maintenance, replacement, and weeding of materials rests with the Library Director, who delegates some of these responsibilities to library staff. Consortium-level collections may be governed by an additional set of collection criteria

Purpose/Scope of Collection:

Our collection contains a broad selection of material formats, including but not limited to print and electronic books, audio/visual items, and games. Our collection goals in support of our mission are:

- To acquire materials that are timely, accurate, and represent a diverse range of interests and viewpoints.
- To provide library materials and resources for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all residents.
- To curate a collection that is balanced and inclusive.
- To continually evaluate the collection to ensure its continued usefulness and relevancy.

Selection Criteria:

In order to curate, review, and maintain a high quality collection based on professionally accepted standards the material's relevance, physical condition, availability of duplicates, availability of age appropriate or grade-level material, and the continued demand of material the Library applies the following general criteria when considering materials for acquisition:

- Relevance to the present or anticipated needs and interests of the community.
- Favorable reviews in professional review journals.
- Authority and reputation of the author, illustrator, and publisher.
- Validity, timeliness, and appropriateness.
- Literary style.
- Quality and type of format.
- Price and availability of funds.
- Residents' requests.
- Educational significance.

- Anticipated longevity.
- Fills an identified gap in the library's collection.

Selection Aids:

The library staff uses a variety of professional and/or popular review sources to aid in the selection process. These include but are not limited to:

- Kirkus Reviews
- Library Journal
- School Library Journal
- Publisher's Weekly
- Booklist
- New York Times Book Reviews and Best Seller lists
- Publishers' catalogs
- Goodreads

Suggestions from residents are always welcome and library staff will determine which will be acted upon consistent with the Library's Mission.

Library materials shall only be excluded for legitimate professionally accepted standards of collection maintenance practices as adopted in the *Collection Development and Maintenance Policy*. Any librarian or staff member of a public library who, in good faith, implements this policy shall be immune from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed and shall have the same immunity with respect to any judicial proceeding that results from such implementation.

Collection Maintenance:

The Library has the responsibility of maintaining the collection through the judicious replacement and withdrawal of materials. Library staff regularly reviews the existing collection to assure its continued usefulness, quality, and condition.

Weeding:

The term "weeding" is used by libraries to describe the deselection and removal of items from their collections. The Library regularly weeds items that are outdated, inconsistent with community interests

and needs, in poor condition, have low usage, or are not in support of the mission of the library. The library also considers the availability of more recent age-appropriate or grade-level appropriate material as it reviews the youth collection. Weeding is an on-going process performed by library staff and the Library Director in the interest of keeping the library's collections relevant and useful.

Replacement of Withdrawn Materials:

Replacement consideration of withdrawn items is based on several criteria:

- Item availability within the Library's consortium, or duplicate copies in our collection.
- The item still meets selection criteria.
- Patron demand or popularity of the author, subject, or title.
- Adequate coverage of the subject area.

Materials that have been withdrawn from the collection may be distributed to the Friends of the Library or other organizations.

Digital Collections/Databases:

Wherever possible, the Library makes electronic information available in the Library and remotely. In choosing to purchase or license electronic databases, the Library applies the same standards for selection as for print materials. However, the Library recognizes that it does not have the same control over electronic databases as it has over its in-house print materials. The Library will make every effort to provide assistance and ensure that the public learns how to use its electronic databases.

Born digital items are those materials created in a digital format. They are distinct from analog items that are subsequently digitized, such as paper manuscripts or photographs. In order to accept born digital items, the Library addresses:

- Copyright and licensing
- Redaction of personally identifiable information
- Any restrictions on use or circulation
- Maintenance and evolution of accepted formats

Gifts/Donations:

The Library welcomes gifts of materials in good condition. The same standards of selection that govern purchases apply to donated items. Gift materials are accepted with the understanding that the items become the property of the Library. Items not meeting the Library's selection criteria will not be retained and may be redistributed to the Friends of the Library or other organizations.

Controversial Materials:

- The Library recognizes that some materials may not be considered appropriate by all patrons. Selections will not be made based upon anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the work in relation to the building of the collection and to serving the interests of the overall library patron community.
- Responsibility for the reading, listening and viewing habits of children rests with their parents or legal guardians. The Library maintains several age-appropriate collections for children and teens. Materials may be reassigned among the collection based on the age appropriateness of the content per professional library standards. Selection of adult material will not be inhibited by the possibility that books may inadvertently come into the possession of children.
- Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents, and no catalogued book or other item will be removed from the open shelves except for the express purpose of protecting it from damage or theft.
- The decision by an author, publisher, or other content creator to withdraw their work from the market and stop selling or publishing it will not be considered sufficient reason alone for the Library to withdraw it from the collection.

Request for Reconsideration:

The Library welcomes expressions of opinion regarding materials found in the collection. Individuals with a vested interest to challenge any library or other educational material, display or program are directed to the *Material Review and Reconsideration Policy* and *Material Review and Reconsideration Policy Form*. The Library limits the consideration of requests to reconsider material, displays, or programs to individuals residing in Suffield.

All library materials are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in section 46a-64 of the general statutes.

This policy is housed on the Kent Memorial website at https://www.suffield-library.org/about-kml/library-policies/