Sarasota County Public Library System

Collection Development Policy

March, 2010

Sarasota County Libraries

Collection Development Policy

I. Introduction

This policy is intended to guide librarians in the selection of materials and to inform the public about the principles upon which library collections are developed and maintained. In making collection decisions, the Sarasota County Public Library System strives to uphold its mission "To provide equal access to information and resources to support community discussion and lifelong learning". Currently, the residents of Sarasota County are served by eight community libraries, each with its own distinguishing characteristics. In order to make the libraries a reliable resource for all the citizens of Sarasota County, the collections are intended to be of sufficient scope and supply for the entire county, with special consideration given to the unique patron needs within each library.

With the exception of Reference materials and a few specialized collections, all materials float within the system and belong to no particular library. Each library has temporary "ownership" of the items on its shelves. Upon circulation and return, the library to which the item is returned becomes the new "owner" and the location is automatically updated in the catalog.

II. Materials Selection

The System will select and maintain a comprehensive collection of print, non-print, audio visual and electronically accessed materials to meet the informational, educational, and recreational needs of the citizens of Sarasota County. The System will strive to offer wide ranging collections that meet the various ages, interests, educational levels, and cultural backgrounds of all members of the community and will provide collections through which an individual may explore all points of view and issues of interest. In making selections, the library staff will do so based upon principle rather than personal opinion, reason rather than prejudice, and judgment rather than censorship. Furthermore, staff will be responsive to public demand for materials of contemporary significance and interest, while balancing this with the need to collect and preserve materials of permanent value.

While library staff makes material selections based upon the tenet of one system, one collection, selectors recognize the distinct characteristics and needs of the populace that each library serves. Community profiles are used to guide selectors in efforts to develop special collections and to meet the unique patron needs within each library.

III. Responsibility for Selection of Materials

The ultimate responsibility for selection materials rests with the General Manager of Libraries and the Management Team, who in turn delegates selection responsibilities to the Collection Development Librarians.

IV. Criteria for Selection

In practice it is impossible to acquire all available print, non-print, and audio visual materials; therefore, out of necessity library staff must employ a policy of selectivity in acquisitions. Selection decisions are made using professional judgment based on knowledge of the existing collection and by evaluating currently available materials using a variety of selection tools.

Audio visual media is considered an art form as well as an instructional media form and is purchased using the same methodology as print materials. Movies and television shows are considered an expression of social history and important markers of societal values. Purchasing is also driven by popular demand and current trends.

Periodical subscriptions are governed by the same selection criteria as other print materials. Staff selects those that have broad appeal and that may be difficult for patrons to obtain individually. Subscriptions are occasionally selected that fit a specific niche within the community. As with all materials purchases, price is a consideration. Staff may seek donations of subscriptions in the case of an expensive title with patron demand but limited appeal.

The expression of public demand is one of the ways that library staff becomes aware of needs. Demand is always subject to professional review and must always be considered within the context of the System's mission and budgetary limitations. Selection of materials in all areas of the library collection is governed, in whole or in part by the following criteria: (not in order of priority)

- Accuracy of information.
- Potential or known use by patrons.
- Popular demand and current trends.

- Literary merit or artistic quality.

- Importance of author.

- Significance of subject matter.

- Critical reviews.

- Reputation of publisher or producer.

- Relationship to other material in the collection.

- Current and/or permanent value to the collection.

- Scarcity of material on the subject.

- Availability of materials.

- Cost.

- Suitability of format (size, paper, print, binding, compatibility with existing library technology).

- Ease of use (in particular with regard to electronic resources).

- Quality of physical format.

- Local interest.

V. Selection Tools

- Current review sources/professional journals.

- Catalogs and flyers.

- Current sources for in print books.

- National and subject bibliographies.

- Online databases.

- Award, Recommended, Best, and Core collection lists.

VI. Intellectual Freedom

An informed public is possible only through unrestricted access to materials that reflect a variety of opinions and ideas. Sarasota County Libraries support and promote this freedom by selecting and providing materials that encompass many diverse issues. In supporting unrestricted access to information, the library does not promulgate or support

specific beliefs or viewpoints. Likewise, the selection of materials for inclusion in the collection does not constitute endorsement of the viewpoints contained therein. On occasion, library materials may include opinions that are controversial and may be unpopular with segments of the public. Sarasota County affirms the public's right to free access to information by supporting the American Library Association's Bill of Rights http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/oif/statementspols/statementsif/librarybillrights.cfm and its companion statements of Freedom to Read http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/oif/statementspols/ftrstatement/freedomreadstatement.cfm and Freedom to View http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/oif/statementspols/ftvstatement/freedomviewstatement.cfm

     With respect to the use of library materials by children, the Library places the responsibility for the selection choices of children with their parents or legal guardians Furthermore; it supports the American Library Association's viewpoint that "parents and only parents have the right and the responsibility to restrict the access of their children – and only their children—to library resources" as stated in their Free Access to Libraries for Minors, An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/oif/statementspols/statementsif/interpretations/freeaccesslibraries.cfm

VII. Patron Requests

     Library's patrons may suggest materials for the library to purchase. To do so, patrons should complete a "Suggestion for Purchase" form in person or on the library website and return it to any Sarasota County Library where it will be forwarded to the staff responsible for Collection Development. Suggestions from the general public are encouraged and will be evaluated by selectors based on the System's criteria for selection. All suggestions will be considered although not all suggestions may be added to the collection.

VIII. DONATIONS

The System accepts donations of books and media with the understanding that they may not necessarily be added to the collection. All donated materials are evaluated by library staff, using the same [selection criteria](#) employed for the purchase of new materials. If the material is not suitable because of condition, out-dated information or other considerations, the library staff reserves the right to discard or to refer such material to the appropriate Friends Group for resale. Pre-publication copies, review copies, award-consideration copies or copies of DVDs or CDs are not accepted as donations. Fill-in-the-blank books, baby books, diaries, wedding register books and coloring books are all examples of materials that are not appropriate for the library collection and should be passed directly to the appropriate Friends of the Library bookstore for sale. Upon request, library staff will supply a donation receipt to the donor, who may fill it out if desired. Library staff does not make recommendations, estimates or appraisal on the value of the donated items.

The System encourages cash gifts, endowment funds and other bequests for improving library resources. Please see the Gifts and Bequests Policy for more information on monetary donation opportunities.

Conditions of Acceptance

- All donated materials will become the exclusive property of the System, and will not be returned.
- Donated materials may or may not become part of the System's collection.
- Donated materials accepted by the System are judged by the same selection criteria as purchased materials.
- Donated materials that become part of the System's collection are governed by the same policies as purchased materials and may or may not float, depending upon the classification.
- Donated materials must be in good physical condition, (i.e.: not musty, moldy, discolored, worn, etc).
- The decision of whether or not to accept a donation is made at the receiving location.

- The System will try to comply with the donor's wishes, but does not accept donations with restrictions on their use.

Unacceptable Materials

- Textbooks.

- Encyclopedias.

- Material that is dusty, damp, moldy or otherwise in poor condition.

- Materials that are considered to be outdated.

- Duplicate material, already held in sufficient number.

Donation Guidelines for Adding to the Collection

Genealogy materials, special collections materials, items of historical value, and local interest items, as well as especially unusual or interesting items or those in an area of concentration, will often be of great value, and may be considered even if they don't closely match the selection criteria. The only exception would be materials that could be contagious to the rest of the collection. The Collection Development Librarians reserve the right to make the final decision.

Library staff at each library is responsible for the initial acceptance and triage of donated items. All materials that are determined to be of value to the collection are searched in the catalog to verify if they are new titles or added copies of existing titles. If library staff decides to add the material to the collection, a donation slip is filled out and placed in the material before it is sent to Technical Services for processing. Each library designates one librarian who has primary responsibility for reviewing all donations before they are sent to Technical Services. This person will initial all donation slips to verify that the item meets established guidelines. An alternate may be assigned to cover times when the primary is not available. Other library staff may be consulted.

No items may have anything that could spread to other library materials: active mold, red rot, live insects, mildew, etc. No items should be unpleasant to use, have excessive highlighting, underlining, or marginal notes. No pornographic additions. No items should be so damaged as to be useless, for example pictures cut out of art books, broken spines, missing covers, pages, or sections, tears, stains, pop-ups or other features torn, worn, or

disabled, used up consumables, filled-in blanks, brittle pages, insect damage, or missing parts.

All items have a finite lifespan. For example, accept items if they are:

- 3 years old or less: science and textbooks, business and legal, space, engineering (except repair manuals for older equipment that may still be in use), sex education
- 2 years old or less: computer, health/therapy, medical
- The latest edition: travel guides, which may be revised annually or many years apart, atlases intended for current use, non-fiction where SYSTEM holds the most recent edition
- As current as possible: biographies of living people, especially if later bios of the same person are available.
- The latest edition, unless the next older is for circulation: encyclopedias
- 10 years or less: all other nonfiction.

The System occasionally receives large collections in a single area. Where the collection has a strong bias on one side of a controversial subject, care should be taken to not allow the systems' collection as a whole to get out of balance.

Self-publication, ad hoc publications and manuscripts follow the same selection criteria as other materials. If necessary, Technical Services will catalog for the local catalog only, in an abbreviated format.

The System accepts only current media formats, and does not add microforms, Reader's Digest condensed books, or magazines to the catalog. Library staff is responsible for checking all multi-part items to be sure that all parts are present and belong to the set and providing all AV with an insert/cover for the container.

Each library collects in limited foreign languages. Language items not collected by the receiving library may be sent to one that does. Note that this does not apply to language instruction items or dictionaries, but only to reading material.

Children's literature should be checked for quality, currency, and accuracy. Dictionaries and vocabulary books should not be published in England, as there may be variances from American language usage.

Promotional materials such as Happy Meal giveaway books, sample CDs, are not added to the collection, and should be passed immediately to the appropriate Friends of the Library bookstore for sale.

Cost to the library system must be considered when adding new or additional copies to the collection. Library staff weighs the desirability of the item against the cost, including shelf space and library staff time, as well as covers, labels, and security tags. Although added copies are the least costly, the reviewing library staff must determine if circulation patterns justify an addition copy. If the material is not an added copy, cataloging sources such as WorldCat (OCLC, FirstSearch) should be consulted to see if a matching record is available. If no useable record can be found, the item will require original cataloging, which is an expense.

IX. Availability and Access to Materials

The System makes its collections available to all. However, not all library materials can be immediately accessible at all locations within the system. Collection Development Librarians decide how many copies to buy and where to initially locate them by considering anticipated demand, the interest of local library users, physical space limitations and available budget. Libraries with larger or specialized collections act as resource libraries for other branches.

The System is committed to the expeditious delivery of materials and information to its users. Some library materials, however, may be subject to use limitations and storage due to considerations of rarity, high level of demand, cost, physical condition and the permanent value of their content. Efforts will be made to provide access to materials and information beyond the holdings of a community library, by means of requests placed either in person or through online services, interlibrary loans, licensed electronic resources, and access to the Internet.

The rapid expansion of electronic and Internet information resources continually poses challenges in fulfilling the information needs of the public. Many materials once available in print are now available solely through the Internet or proprietary database

products. Providing access to electronic resources is an integral part of the library's collection development efforts.

X. Reconsideration of Materials

When a member of the community wishes the Library to reconsider a book or any other material in the collection, he or she should submit a "Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources" This form is available at all library locations.

Procedure for Review of Library Materials

1. A completed form should be returned to the Library Manager or to the Manager of Public Services.
2. If the form is returned to the Library Manager, he or she will immediately inform the Manager of Public Services and the General Manager of the Library System.
3. The Manager of Public Services will notify the patron that the form has been received and is being acted upon.
4. The Manager of Public Services will confer with the Library Manager and any staff members who discussed the matter with the patron in order to understand the background of the complaint.
5. The Manager of Public Services will review the request and forward it to the Collection Development Librarians or selected staff as appropriate.
6. The Collection Development Librarians will read or view the material, consider critical reviews, prior Requests for Reconsideration, and the circulation history of the material as well as the criteria and rationale for the initial selection. They will submit their recommendation to Manager of Public Services and the General Manager of the Library System.
7. All Library Managers will be notified of the recommendation and will provide their feedback about it to the Manager of Public Services within 5 business days, who will forward the packet to the General Manager of the Library System.
8. The General Manager will review the documentation and make the final decision concerning the material.

9. The Library Managers are responsible for distributing the information on the decision to their staff.

10. The Manager of Public Services will respond to the patron in writing explaining the Library System's decision concerning the material.

11. All decisions resulting from Requests for Reconsideration of Library Materials will apply to all libraries in the System.

XI. Rebalancing the Collection

Due to the floating collection, there are times when a library is a net-lender or net receiver, and the collection will need to be adjusted in order for it to remain in balance. Each library has a designated Gaps and Overflow contact, who communicates with Library Administration when these situations occur. This provides for a centralized assessment of need and distribution, and keeps Collection Development staff current with collection popularity.

XII. Materials De-Selection

De-selection and selection must be recognized as similar yet different facets of the same continuous process that defines collection development. Like the selection process, de-selection should reflect the goals and mission of the Library. The Library maintains an on-going process of discarding materials based upon the elimination of unnecessary items, outdated materials, materials no longer of interest or in demand, duplicates, and materials in poor condition. Frequency of circulation, community interest and availability of newer and more up to date materials are of prime consideration.

Responsibility for the De-Selection of Materials

The responsibility for the de-selection of all materials lies with the professional staff within each library. Although de-selection is a professional responsibility, other staff may assist in identifying material that should be weeded.

De-Selection Criteria

1. Usage/Age

   - Frequency of use/potential use.

   - In-house use.

   - Interlibrary loan circulation.

   - Age: publication, imprints, or copyright; purchase or shelving date.

2. Value/Quality

   - Currency of information

   - Subject matter

   - Historical importance.

   - Cost.

   - Availability of other similar materials.

   - Physical appearance/condition relative to other factors of importance.

   - Superseded or duplicated.

3. Condition

   - Evidence of damage or deterioration.

   - Aged, dirty, musty.

   - Discolored or otherwise unsuitable for circulation.

XIII. Evaluation

Collection evaluation is used to identify areas of strength and weakness within the collection, to inspect the physical condition of the collection; remind staff of standards of collection maintenance; to meet with staff to discuss specific areas of the collections overall needs; and identify community changes which affect the selection process. Evaluation criteria includes but is not limited to circulation statistics, in house use, and. availability of material in the system.

XIV. Electronic Resources

Databases

Online Databases are selected using the same [selection criteria](#) as all other library materials. Special consideration is given to proprietary materials that otherwise may not be available to the public. In selecting databases, cost and access are considered. Whenever possible, online databases are purchased that allow patrons direct access from home.

Web Site Links

The mission of the System's Web site is to allow access to timely, accurate and useful electronic information for community residents beyond the physical walls of the library. The System Web pages highlight the Library System and its services and provide a subject-approach to selected Internet sites.

Links to Internet sites from the System Web site are selected to broaden, enrich and complement the Library System's print and audio-visual collections. These online resources may be selected to provide home or in-library access to types of material available in other formats at the library or they may be selected to provide more current and more diverse material than available at the library. Web site links are selected that are consistent with the library's collection development policy with the overall goal of providing accurate and timely information that will meet the informational, educational and recreational needs of our diverse community.

Linking to a Web site does in no way indicate that System or Sarasota County Government endorses or sponsors the site. Sites area carefully selected and reviewed by Sarasota County librarians in accordance with established selection policies to help library users find information on the Internet. The Web sites are separate and independent from the System and the System does not control the information contained on remote Web sites. The Library system cannot ensure the availability or accuracy of external electronic resources. As with print materials, not all electronic sources provide accurate, complete or current information.

Web sites are checked and reviewed periodically for content, accessibility, accuracy and usefulness. If a site no longer meets the selection criteria or is inactive or out-of-date, it may be removed. Links to Web sites may be also removed if they change and no longer meet the Libraries' selection criteria.

Sites are evaluated on the basis of their credibility, quality and usefulness in order to meet the needs and interest of the patrons and library staff. Factors considered when evaluating sites include:

Access - stable site, no fees required, consistently available

- Design - well organized, clear instructions, easy to use, uncluttered and cleanly designed, graphics that enhance content, do not frame other sites content
- Content - authoritative, documented, verifiable, accurate, updated regularly, appropriateness of subject matter
- Preference may be given to educational (.edu), governmental (.gov), and non-profit organization sites (.org)

The System Web site will continue to change in response to the ever-changing nature of the Internet.

Appendix A

System
Suggestion for Purchase

Author _____

Title_____

Publisher & Copyright Date_____

List Price _____**Today's Date**_____

Your Name _____**Phone**_____

Library Branch _____

Thank you for your interest in suggesting this title for review.

This suggestion does not imply automatic purchase, nor does it place a

reserve on the title for you. Please check with your library for availability.

Once this item is in the library catalog you may place a reserve on it.

Appendix B
Request for reconsideration of Library Resources
Sarasota County Public Library System

The Sarasota County Public Library System has established reconsideration procedures to address concerns about library materials. This form is the first step in these procedures. Please answer each question as completely as possible and return this form to either the Manager of your nearest library or to the Manager of Public Services, Sarasota County Library Administration, 5th Floor, 1660 Ringling Blvd., Sarasota, FL, 34236. Designated library staff will consider your request. After review, you will receive a letter communicating the decision of the Library System. This review will occur within 45 days of receipt of your request for reconsideration.
Please note that this is a public document under Florida Law. Your name and address are subject to disclosure upon request.

Name:_____   Date:_____

Address_____   Zip Code _____

Telephone: _____ Email _____

Library Card # _____ (optional)

Material to be reconsidered
[ ] Book   [ ] DVD   [ ] Compact Disc   [ ] Other

Author:_____

Title :_____

1. Did you read/listen/view the entire item? [ ] Yes [ ] No

2. Why would you like this material to be reconsidered? Please be as specific as possible. Use the other side of this paper if necessary.
_____
_____
_____

3. What are your specific recommendations regarding this item?
_____
_____
_____

4. What material would you suggest to provide additional information or other viewpoints?
_____
_____

The System's Collection Development Policy can be found on their website
https://www.scgov.net/Library/Libraries/Pages/ServicesPolicies.aspx
Rev. 3/15/10