Jacob Edwards Library



Collection Development Policy

Approved by Board of Trustees: January 2023
Preamble approved by Board of Trustees: May 2023

At Jacob Edwards Library, we value the intellectual freedoms protected under the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and uphold policies that protect the right to read. The First Amendment's provision of free speech includes the right to challenge books and materials at the library. Challenging books at the library is not new, and the Jacob Edwards Library respects the right to do so according to our Reconsideration Policy. The library does not exclude materials based on origin, background, or views. The removal of such books is censorship that denies free access to information and restricts intellectual freedom. Libraries are for everyone. Adopted in 1939 by the American Library Association (ALA), the Library Bill of Rights emphasizes equal and equitable access for all individuals, including minors, to a diverse collection by and about a diversity of people and cultures. Living in a free society means we get to choose what we want to read unimpeded by others' beliefs or viewpoints. Our library collections strive to be inclusive of and relevant to all members of our community.

The Library acquires materials in a variety of formats, including paper and digital. The same work may be acquired in more than one format to meet the various needs and/or preferences of library patrons. Individual items are purchased based on the following criteria:

- Contemporary significance or current usefulness or interest.
- Authority and competence of presentation.
- Importance as an historical record or of permanent value.
- Relevance to existing collection.
- Presentation of multiple views on controversial issues.
- Balance of special group interest with general demand.
- Recommendations of accepted established professional review sources.

Local Authors

The library will attempt to acquire titles by local authors (Southbridge and area towns) that are published by mainstream publishers and fit the selection criteria. Books by local authors that

are donated may be considered for inclusion in the library's collection, but will be subject to the same selection criteria as books the library purchases, as well as the guidelines for gifts. Materials that are not selected for inclusion in the collection will be transferred to the Friends of the Jacob Edwards Library for use in its book sales.

Self-Published Materials

Titles that are self-published, even if available via mainstream distributors, will be added only if they meet the Library's selection criteria.

Patron Requests

The Library welcomes suggestions for the purchase of materials. Suggestions will be subject to the same standards of selection as other considered materials. Textbooks will generally not be considered unless they are the only source of information on a topic of general interest.

Donations

The Library appreciates donations of materials and accepts them with the following conditions:

- That the same criteria apply to the incorporation of donations into the collection as the selection of other library materials.

Challenges to Library Materials

Requests to withdraw materials from the collection are to be made in writing via the Jacob Edwards Library Reconsideration of Library Materials Form by resident patrons only and will be evaluated within the context of the Freedom to Read Statement, Library Bill of Rights, and this policy.

Deselection of Materials / Collection Maintenance

The discarding of materials from the collection is done on a systematic basis. This function is necessitated by limitations of space, obsolescence of material, lack of use over an extended period of time, physical condition of the item, and acquisition of new materials. With the exception of material in the local history collection, the Library does not serve an archival function. The same criteria that are applied to the purchase of new books will be applied to the discarding and weeding of books. Materials discarded because of loss, vandalism, poor condition, or outdated content will be considered for replacement.