

Poplar Bluff Municipal Library Collection Development Policy

Poplar Bluff Municipal Library (Library) mission provides direction for the purchase and acquisition of library materials in both physical and electronic formats.

Poplar Bluff Municipal Library District with its community partners provides and promotes equal access to reading, information, cultural and intellectual resources.

Introduction

A collection development policy is a written document that defines the scope and nature of a library's existing collections, and the principles and plans for continuing development of resources as they relate to institutional goals, general selection criteria and the rights of library users to receive information. "Library collections" includes all resources in all formats acquired for use by the public, including resources obtained through the library's membership in selected consortia or through the library's contracts with third-party vendors. The collection priorities for the Library are:

- To encourage individual self-directed lifelong learning for personal growth and enjoyment
- To provide early childhood development resources to ensure young children start school ready to learn
- To meet the diverse information needs and interests of the community
- To collaborate with other educational, civic, cultural and recreational agencies in fostering a dynamic community identity
- To promote economic growth and community stability by providing resources for job seekers and small business owners

Service Area

The Library serves the City of Poplar Bluff and the six Missouri counties of Butler, Carter, Dunklin, Ripley, Stoddard and Wayne Counties. Residents in the service area may get a free library card and come under the policies and guidelines of the library.

Collection Development

The ultimate responsibility for all library programs, collections, and services is legally vested in the Library Board of Trustees (Board). The Board delegates administrative authority for the selection of resources and the development of library collections to the Director, operating within the framework of policies determined by the Board. The Director in turn delegates day-to-day responsibility for overseeing resource selection and collection development. Taking into account community needs and interests, the staff is expected to employ their professional responsibility, training, experience, and knowledge of the community. They must use various recognized professional tools to evaluate and select resources in accordance with the criteria listed below. The Director has the authority to override staff recommendations and approve or disapprove any selection decision, based on professional judgment and expertise.

Principles

The Library operates within the framework of the principles of freedom of speech (and the corollary right to receive information) and personal responsibility set forth in the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, and Article One, Section Eight of the Missouri Constitution:

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."

"That no law shall be passed impairing the freedom of speech, no matter by what means communicated: that every person shall be free to say, write or publish, or otherwise communicate whatever he will on any subject, being responsible for all abuses of that liberty; and that in all suits and prosecutions for libel or slander the truth thereof may be given in evidence; and in suits and prosecutions for libel the jury, under the direction of the court, shall determine the law and facts."

The Library attempts to provide diverse perspectives on a wide range of topics, including political, social and religious, no matter how controversial or objectionable those ideas may be to some people. Resources are not restricted or excluded because of partisan, doctrinal or personal disapproval of the race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender, or sexual orientation of the content creator. Resources are not restricted or excluded because of the views expressed by the creator generally or in a specific resource. Selectors actively seek out resources representing different points of view and that are responsive to the diverse needs and interests of the communities the library serves. Resource selection may be limited by budget constraints and available shelf space. Resource sharing with other libraries provides an alternative means to fulfill library users' information needs and interests. Selection decisions are not based on the personal interests or preferences of library trustees, employees, or volunteers. To do so would be a serious breach of professional responsibility and ethics. The selection of any resource should not be construed as an endorsement by the Library of the content or views expressed therein. The Library has adopted as examples of best practices the following American Library Association documents (appended to this policy):

- [Library Bill Of Rights And Its Interpretations](#)
- [Freedom To Read Statement](#)
- [Freedom To View Statement](#)

Criteria for Selection

The following is a list of general criteria to be considered in the selection of library materials. This list is not in priority order, nor is it meant to be exhaustive. Any given resource is not required to meet every criterion to qualify for selection.

- Appeal to the educational, informational, cultural, or recreational interests and needs of library users and the community served
- Favorable reviews in professionally recognized journals, recommended resource lists,

or award lists

- Subject, style, and reading level are age-appropriate for the intended audience
- Timeliness or permanent value
- Diversity of sources, including new, small, independent publishers/distributors, as well as long-established major publishers/distributors
- Expressed or anticipated popular demand
- Presents alternative or diverse voices and viewpoints
- Price in relation to terms and conditions of access
- Budget constraints in relation to overall collection
- Accessibility and quality of physical or electronic format for library users with disabilities
- Scope and depth of present library collection or availability of resources in other area libraries
- Clarity, accuracy, and logic of treatment
- Comprehensiveness and depth of treatment
- Vitality and originality
- Artistic presentation
- Demand for downloadable resources that can be remotely accessed online
- Authority or authenticity of materials

Exclusion of Materials

The Director is expressly charged with the responsibility to execute, in good faith and with the highest degree of professional skill, the collection development policy of the Library. The Director is also professionally obligated to resist with equal good faith, skill and vigor, the efforts of any individual or group to compel the addition or withdrawal of library resources, or to limit free access to library resources, or to modify the selection process based upon criteria substantially in conflict with the policy established by the Board.

Resources that present a frank and uncompromising portrait of social conditions or intimate aspects of human experience shall not be excluded or restricted because of explicit language or description. The library acknowledges that such resources may offend some users. But if the content meets the standards of the written selection policy, responds to the interests and concerns of other members of the community, and broadens the range and diversity of the collection, the selection is justified. Disapproval by an individual or group does not justify denying access to everyone else. Every user has the right to judge for him/herself, but not to impose his/her judgment on all other users.

The Library has established separate areas for children and teens to make it easier for those users to find resources that are age-appropriate and of interest to them. However, the Library does not limit or prohibit children or teens from accessing resources in the general collections. Rather, the Library upholds the right and responsibility of parents or guardians to supervise their own child's library use and to determine which library resources are appropriate for their child. Library employees are happy to assist parents and children in making their selections.

While the Library may provide materials that are useful to students engaged in formal educational programs, it is not within the Library's scope to support the curricula of area schools. The Library does not provide textbooks or multiple copies of print resources for classrooms or homeschool use. The availability of simultaneous access to electronic resources

for classrooms or homeschool groups will vary depending on the access rights included in the library's contract with the vendor.

Library resources are organized and maintained in collections so that users can locate the resource(s) of their choice without constraint. The cataloging and shelving of resources does not reflect value judgments on their content. The Library does not assign locations or include warning statements about specific resources in the public access catalog in an attempt to discourage or restrict access.

All resources are shelved in their proper order on open shelves, except for rare or fragile materials or unique or oversized formats. For the convenience of users, genre fiction, local history, genealogy, and neighborhood collections, as well as non-circulating (reference) resources, are shelved in separate collections and have appropriate directional shelving notations.

The Library ordinarily does not purchase costly, specialized resources of limited interest to the communities we serve. In-depth collections designed for serious and extensive research are the responsibility of academic and special libraries in the area. The library staff refers users to such specialized libraries in the region, assists with interlibrary loan services, or suggests online resources as suitable alternatives.

The Library participates in regional and national resource-sharing collaborations that expand access to other library collections through mutual interlibrary lending agreements. Resources made available through these collaborations are subject to the resource selection and development policies of the respective institutions and consortia.

Library Collections

Scope, recommended age levels, and purpose and intent of the library's collections are listed below. Patrons are not limited by these age recommendations. All patrons are welcome to borrow materials from any collection. Please note that age recommendations are just that, a recommendation. It is not the duty or responsibility of the Library, its Board of Trustees, administration, staff, or volunteers to determine which collection is suitable or appropriate for individual users. Any library cardholder or resident of the Library's service district may formally request the reconsideration of age designations through the reconsideration process.

Materials selected for the Adult and Young Adult collections are intended for mature readers. Responsibility for monitoring and overseeing a minor's reading and use of the library rests with the parent or legal guardian, not with the Library, its Board of Trustees, administration, staff, and volunteers.

Children's Collections (ages 0-12)

The Children's Collection is curated and designed for children between birth and 12 years of age. Material in this area is curated and maintained by both the Children's Librarian and Collections Librarian. To assist in curation and the designation of age appropriate material across this area, selectors utilize publishers' reviews and ratings, professionally recognized school journals, reviewers, resource lists, and award lists. Usage patterns and patron interest and feedback drives the growth of this collection.

Kathern Harris Children's Book List

In recognition of Kathern Harris's dedicated service on the Library Board and her lasting contributions to reading and education, the Library will annually select and purchase ten children's books suitable for readers up to the 6th grade. This curated list will be announced each February in conjunction with Black History Month and will feature titles that elevate diverse stories, authors, and characters. To distinguish these selections, a gold foil seal—designed by library staff—will be affixed to each book's cover.

Collection	Description	Recommended Age
Board Books	Board books for infants and toddlers and their caregivers are both educational and recreational in intent.	0-3
Children's Picture Books	Children's picture books consist of books of either educational or recreational intent. Picture books are often the child's first introduction to books. They are usually written for pre-readers and beginning readers and are typically shared with the child by an adult.	3-8
Readalongs	Readalongs consist of picture books of educational and recreational intent. Each book is accompanied by an audio CD recording of the story. Due to interest and circulation decline other formats may take the place of Readalongs.	3-8
Early Readers	Early Readers consist of early reading books for preschoolers and early elementary students who want to develop their reading skills. Many series are targeted for a specific reading level. In most cases, vocabulary is controlled, the text is well-spaced, margins are wide, and illustrations are supplementary to the text.	5-7
Juvenile Non-Fiction	Juvenile non-fiction consists of nonfiction materials assembled to meet the informational, educational, and recreational reading needs of elementary and middle school-aged students. Attention is paid to meeting needs created by curricula on topics such as endangered species, science fair projects, Missouri, ancient cultures, mythology, etc., or recreational subjects as the demands become apparent.	9-12
Juvenile Fiction	Juvenile fiction consists of titles intended to meet the recreational needs of students with a second through fourth-grade reading level. Because reading levels vary from child to child, a few materials at a higher or lower level are also included. Recognized children's classics are often represented in a variety of editions.	6-9
Juvenile Audio	Juvenile audio consists of titles intended for students with a second through fourth-grade reading level. Format types in this area change and overlap to match current trends and technological advancements.	6-9
Juvenile Graphic Novels	Popular graphic novel series and classic cartoon figures are represented in graphic novel format, highly illustrated with accompanying dialogue and text. The Library acquires and maintains comics and graphic novels for enjoyment as well as the encouragement of reluctant readers.	6-9
Children's Magazines	Magazines in this collection include general interest and subject publications. Format type in this area is changing as more electronic	6-9

	magazines become available.	
Stem Kits	STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) kits are geared toward children (4 to 12 years old) along with their caregivers and teachers. Each kit contains a nonfiction book and two corresponding hands-on learning activities. Topics covered include space, geology, measuring, number patterns, coding, engineering, and more.	4-12
Kits	Plans are underway to develop circulating kits that highlight and encourage hands-on learning, including fiber art,s among others. Kits covering an array of themes and topics will be made available.	9-12
Upper Elementary Graphic Novels	Popular graphic novel series and classics represented in graphic novel format make up this collection. The Library acquires and maintains graphic novels for enjoyment as well as the encouragement of reluctant readers.	9-12
Upper Elementary Fiction	The UP fiction collection consists of titles intended to meet the recreational needs of students with a middle school to junior high reading level. Because reading levels vary from child to child, a few materials at a higher or lower level are also included. Recognized children's classics are often represented in a variety of editions. A broad variety of genres is represented	9-12
Upper Elementary Audio	The UP Fiction Audio collection mirrors the physical UP Fiction collection. Format types in this area change and overlap to match current trends and technological advancements.	9-12
Juvenile Video	The juvenile video collection consists of both nonfiction and fiction films. The nonfiction films cover educational topics while fiction films include feature films, television series, mini-series, and made-for-television movies.	0-13
Listed age ranges are merely recommendations as each individual reader's interests and abilities are diverse, varied, and unique. It is the responsibility of the parent to determine an item's suitability and appropriateness for their child.		

Young Adult/Teen Collections (ages 13-17)

The Young Adult and Teen Collections are designed for individuals aged 13 to 17. The Collections Librarian is responsible for the curation and maintenance of these materials. Selection of age-appropriate content is guided by usage patterns, patron interest, and feedback, as well as reviews and ratings from reliable publishers, professional reviewers, school journals, resource lists, and award lists.

Materials intended for younger teens (ages 13–15) are clearly marked with a green star on the spine. This visual indicator helps patrons and staff easily identify titles specifically developed for or featuring protagonists in this age range, ensuring the selected materials meet the developmental, emotional, and recreational reading needs of younger teen readers.

Category	Description	Recommended Age
Fiction (YA)-Other Worlds (YA)	Classic literature, popular best sellers, and genre fiction (Other Worlds-Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Paranormal) are included. The emphasis of this collection is on American and English authors, but representative authors from other countries are also included in English translations. Young adult titles target the high school age demographic but many adult authors have crossed over, developing	13-17

	overlapping audiences of young adults and adults.	
Graphic Novels (YA)	Popular graphic novel series and manga make up this collection and its growth is driven by data and demand from the community served.	13-17
Non-Fiction (YA)	This collection consists of nonfiction materials assembled to meet the informational, educational and recreational reading needs of high school-aged students. Attention is paid to meeting needs created by curricula on topics such as endangered species, science fair projects, Missouri, ancient cultures, mythology, etc., or recreational subjects as the demands become apparent.	13-17
YA Book Club	These kits typically contain 1 audiobook and at least 6 regular print books. This collection mostly consists of popular best sellers, titles typically seen in high school curriculum, and other works that both entertain and educate.	13-17
<p>Listed age ranges are merely recommendations as each individual reader's interests and abilities are diverse, varied, and unique. It is the responsibility of the parent to determine an item's suitability and appropriateness for their child.</p>		

Adult Collections (ages 18+)

The Adult Collection is curated and designed for those who are age 18 and above. This collection is maintained by the Collections Librarian, who utilizes popular fiction lists, publishers' ratings, professional reviewers, and award lists to further nurture the Adult Collection. The growth of this collection is data-driven while also taking into consideration the broad range of reading interests and tastes of the communities served.

Collection	Description	Recommended Age
Fiction / Other Worlds / Western / Large Print Fiction	Classic literature, popular best sellers, genre fiction, literature from all time periods and works from all parts of the world are included in the fiction collection to entertain and enrich human understanding. The emphasis of this collection is on American and English authors, but representative authors from other countries are also included in English translations. Large Print, Other Worlds (Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Paranormal fiction) also make up the Adult Fiction collection.	18+
Non-Fiction Neighborhoods	Nonfiction Neighborhoods represents a dynamic, user-centered portion of the library's adult print collection. Informed by ongoing patron feedback and careful analysis of how our community uses library resources, these neighborhoods organize nonfiction materials into practical, easy-to-browse topic areas that align with real-world questions and interests. The primary focus for the nonfiction collection centers on items of popular demand, current events, general knowledge, general interests, and titles relevant to the local community and region. While the library continues to adapt its collections to reflect increased use of digital resources, the Nonfiction Neighborhoods ensure that our print nonfiction materials remain current, high-quality, and responsive to the needs of the greatest number of patrons. This curated approach supports discovery, learning, and recreational reading while maintaining the library's long-standing commitment to serving our community	18+

	effectively.	
Audiobooks	Audiobooks mirror the adult fiction collection, with priority given to high-demand series and authors. Due to decline of circulation and abandonment of the CD format, it is anticipated that this collection will be phased out over time in favor of digital audio collections.	18+
Graphic Novels	Graphic Novels continue to be a popular format among adult patrons with a wide range of topics, stories, genres, and content. Popular series and manga make up this collection, and its growth is driven by data and demand from the community served.	18+
Book Club Kits	Some kits contain 1 audiobook as well as 7 physical books, while newer kits contain 8 physical books. New kits will highlight digital options to patrons with direct links to our Libby or Hoopla apps. This collection mostly consists of popular best sellers, classic literature, and other works that both entertain and educate. Genres range from historical fiction to fantasy, and will also include some popular non-fiction titles.	18+
Memory Kits	Memory Kits are used to assist patrons in connecting with loved ones with dementia, memory loss, or cognitive impairment. Each kit is an interactive bundle of library materials which includes a book focusing on caregiving, picture books, a puzzle or brain teaser, and a nostalgic movie, tv show, or informative video.	18+
Microforms	The Library provides patrons with access to the Daily American Republic, along with previous local titles, on microfilm.	18+
Genealogy/Reference	The purpose of the Genealogy Collection is to provide resource materials targeted towards individuals conducting local history or genealogical research. This collection contains historical and genealogical research information that focuses on the City of Poplar Bluff, Butler County, surrounding counties, and the State of Missouri.	18+
Newspapers	The Library provides patrons with the local newspaper, the Daily American Republic, in physical and digital format.	18+
Equipment	The Library may include circulating equipment such as wifi hotspots and other technology (e.g., tablets and laptops).	18+
<p>Listed age ranges are merely recommendations as each individual reader's interests and abilities are diverse, varied, and unique. It is the responsibility of the parent to determine an item's suitability and appropriateness for their child.</p>		

Electronic and Digital Collections (all ages)

Electronic and digital collections are curated and maintained by vendors. Vendors set age appropriate designations for materials in these collections. Staff are available to assist patrons with navigating to age appropriate content in the library's digital collections.

Weeding

The purpose of weeding is to continuously reevaluate and refresh the collection in conjunction with the selection of new and replacement resources. By continuously evaluating the collections, the library can supply library users with quality collections of information, ideas,

and opinions on current issues, curated resources of lasting value, and appealing choices for popular enjoyment. Library staff identify which resources to remove from the collections and which to retain and/or replace. Dated, worn, damaged or no longer relevant library resources are weeded or deselected from the collections based on professional standards and procedures. Just as selectors are responsible for specific subjects, genres or formats, they are also responsible for weeding those areas. In keeping with general standards for library collections.

Criteria for Weeding

The Library employs professional collection management procedures, including *CREW: a Weeding Manual for Modern Libraries* (Austin, Texas: The Texas State Library, 2008) to determine when resources should be withdrawn from the library collections. Factors considered when weeding include the physical condition of the item, number of copies available, frequency and currency of use, adequate coverage in the field, continuing relevance, alternative formats and availability of updated content. The CREW method (Continuous Review, Evaluation, and Weeding) uses an acronym, MUSTIE, to indicate when an item should be removed from the collection. MUSTIE stands for:

- **M**isleading and/or factually inaccurate
- **U**gly - worn out beyond mending or rebinding
- **S**uperseded by a new edition or a better source
- **T**ransitory - materials of intense but short-lived interest that are now past their shelf-life
- **I**rrelevant to the needs and interests of the communities served
- **A**vailable **E**lsewhere - resources easily borrowed from another source

While the Library attempts to have copies of standard and important works, it does not automatically replace all resources withdrawn. The same criteria that apply to original selection also apply to replacements. The Library participates in regional and national resource sharing collaborations that expand access to collections by mutual lending agreements. Resources shared through these collaborations are subject to the weeding policies of their respective consortia.

Disposal of Withdrawn Materials

Library resources, when removed from the library collections on the basis of accepted professional practices, may be placed in the library's book sale, given for charitable purposes such as Little Free Libraries, Santa Land, Little Red Book Shelf, or the Butler County Health Department, or destroyed/recycled depending upon condition and marketability. Library employees and volunteers are prohibited from withdrawing or discarding library resources with the intent to resell them for personal profit.

The Library does not accept requests to hold discarded items for individuals.

Gifts, Memorials, and Other Donations

See [Library Gift Policy](#).

Requests for Purchase

The Library encourages users to suggest resources they would like to see added to library collections. User suggestions alert library staff to new authors, trends, or developing issues or interests in the community. Assuming user suggestions meet selection criteria, these are accorded priority in purchasing. If approved for purchase, the user who suggested the resource is notified of its arrival and given a priority opportunity to check out that item.

Requests for Reconsideration of Material

The Library welcomes public comments on resources selected or not selected for inclusion in library collections. Such comments often bring to the Library's attention user needs and interests that are not being adequately met. Often concerns can be satisfied by inviting users to discuss them with the Director. However, if this does not suffice, the user may address their concerns through the [Request for Reconsideration Form](#).

Any library cardholder or resident of the Library's service district may formally request the reconsideration of library resources by completing in full and signing a "Request for Reconsideration" form. When these requests are received and signed by the cardholder, the Director will

- consult with the collection development staff examining the resource in question, check reviews, and determine whether it conforms to the priorities and criteria of the library selection and collection development policy.
- reconsider the classification of a resource in consultation with the appropriate staff to determine if the existing classification is appropriate for its subject, style, theme, and intended audience.

The reconsideration request, along with the written review and recommendation of the Director, shall be presented at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees. Based on the principles and criteria of the resource selection and collection development policy, the Board of Trustees shall decide whether to retain, reclassify, or withdraw the resource in question. The Director shall convey the Board's decision to the initiator of the request, in a written communication, within seven days. In compliance with [15 CSR 30-200.015](#) of the Missouri State Regulations, the results of the challenge will also be disclosed to the public and published on the library's website.

In cases where the initiator of the request is not satisfied with the Board's decision and the situation escalates, the Board may authorize one or more of the following actions:

- holding a public hearing to invite the widest possible community comment on the issue;
- making accurate and complete information available to all news media;
- reporting the incident to the Missouri Library Association and the American Library Association's Office of Intellectual Freedom;
- seeking legal advice.

In situations of public controversy, when the Board has determined that the actions of the Director and/or other employees conformed to the established policy, the Board shall provide moral support to the staff, resist calls for the censure or dismissal of employees, provide

documentation that library policy was followed, and authorize fund for legal defense. If the Library is required to defend itself in legal action, the Board shall determine whether to seek assistance from specialty counsel. Resources subject to reconsideration remain available to the public, pending final disposition of the request for reconsideration.

A challenged title will not be reevaluated for a period of one year.

Revision

The Director and managers shall review this policy on a regular basis and recommend revisions as needed for adoption by the Library Board of Trustees. The Board shall formally review the policy in its entirety every five years.

Non-Discrimination Statement

Poplar Bluff Municipal Library District is an equal employment opportunity employer. It also complies with all federal, state and local laws protecting job applicants, employees, volunteers, presenters, and library users by prohibiting discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex (including gender identity, sexual orientation, and pregnancy), national origin, age (40 or older), disability, or genetic information.

Approved Board of Trustees 6-3-2019; Approved 6-5-2023; Approved 12/8/2025.