

Joseph H. Plumb Memorial Library
17 Constitution Way P.O. Box 69
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Collection Development & Materials Selection Policy

Plumb Memorial Library
Rochester, Massachusetts

Our Mission

It is the mission of the Joseph H. Plumb Memorial Library to make available to the people of the town of Rochester a center which provides information, entertainment, education, and enrichment. We seek to provide these services to all segments of the community, and to all age groups. Our collection will reflect the wants and needs of the whole community, and we will make available, as best we can, material in many formats and reflecting many points of view. The Trustees and staff are committed to intellectual freedom, and support the *Library Bill of Rights*.

In keeping with the mission of the Plumb Library, the Board of Trustees have adopted this policy regarding collection development and materials selection.

Responsibility for Selection

The Board of Trustees delegates to the Library Director the authority and responsibility for selection and maintenance of all library materials. The Library Director will select material based on the wants and needs of the community as a whole, and taking into account the goals and objectives of the library. The Library Director will use their best judgment for selection, based on daily observation of circulation trends, reference questions, and library circulation statistics, as well as patron requests and interlibrary loan activity.

General Selection Criteria

Titles will be considered for purchase based upon the following criteria:

- Favorable reviews in established review journals (such as *Library Journal*, *Booklist*, etc.)
- Need for title in the context of the collection
- Requests for title submitted by patrons
 - If a title has been requested by three or more patrons, the library will look into purchasing the title even if it does not meet the first two criteria, first checking McNaughton Book Rental for the title. If it is of fleeting interest, it will be rented through McNaughton to be sent back once interest wanes.
 - If the title has fewer than 3 requests and is not available through SAILS, a request will be sent to ComCat or ILL.
 - If the library is unable to obtain a particular title for a patron, the staff will try to provide the patron with as much information as possible so that they can purchase the title or suggest a reasonable alternative available through SAILS, ComCat, or ILL.

Specific Selection Criteria

It is the goal of the Plumb Library to provide its users with a well-rounded, balanced collection of materials consisting of information on all major subject areas and all genres of fiction. As we cater to many age and interest levels, we cannot specialize in any particular area, but will

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strive to improve areas where material is lacking. Most types of material will be considered for purchase; the following are guidelines for specific types of material:

- **TEXTBOOKS:** The library will not generally purchase textbooks. Due to their specialized nature and their expense, they do not fit the criteria for the collection. Texts given as gifts may be added in specific areas where there is a need and where the information is current.
- **FRAGILE MATERIALS:** The library will not generally purchase materials that are fragile in nature or that require unique packaging or specialized treatment. These might include toy/moveable/pop-up books for children or adults; books with special inserts or removable pages; books with “fill in the blanks” type pages, etc. Exceptions may be made on an individual basis, especially if the fragile material is part of the library’s historical collection.
- **DVDS:** The library will purchase as interest and space allows. Ratings are not considered when purchasing.
- **TIMELY MATERIAL:** The library tries to fill the immediate informational needs of its patrons while maintaining its goal of providing them with material of lasting value. If interest is substantial, we will purchase titles on subjects of fleeting interest or rent them through McNaughton Book Rental will be sent back once to McNaughton once interest wanes.
- **CONTROVERSIAL MATERIALS:** The library will collect materials on all subjects regardless of their perceived appropriateness by any individual or group. Controversial but important subjects (for example: sex education, abortion, witchcraft, etc.) will be added as needed, based on reviews and striving for balance. No library material will be shelved separately or restricted based on its subject matter. The Board of Trustees and staff support intellectual freedom and have adopted the philosophy expressed in the American Library Association’s *Library Bill of Rights*. Parents are ultimately responsible for the material their children use within the library and the material they take home. The library does not act in loco parentis. Patrons wishing to challenge the library’s selection decisions should consult the guidelines set forth in this document for dealing with challenged materials (see final section).
- **GIFTS:** The library accepts gifts of materials of all kinds. Please refer to the library’s Gift Policy for requirements and restrictions.
- **LOCAL AUTHORS:** Local authors publishing material of interest to the community will be purchased, or their books accepted as gifts.
- **SPECIAL COLLECTIONS:** The library seeks to provide its patrons access to a collection of historical and genealogical important materials relating to the town of Rochester & surrounding towns, as well as Rochester families. Such material will be offered for in-house use, and ongoing maintenance and preservation of such materials will be a high priority. The library welcomes all additions of locally pertinent material to this collection.

Resource Sharing

The Plumb Memorial Library is a member of the SAILS Library Network, an automated resource sharing network of public, academic, school, and special libraries covering a wide geographic area in the south coast area of Massachusetts. Shared digital collections provide online access to a variety of ebooks, audiobooks, and streaming video. A weekday delivery system ensures availability of physical materials. For patrons with needs beyond the local library and the SAILS network, the Commonwealth Catalog allows access to materials in libraries throughout the Commonwealth. Cooperative interlibrary loan agreements allow access to materials outside of Massachusetts throughout the United States.

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Collection Maintenance

The entire collection will be evaluated, maintained, and weeded on a continuous basis throughout the year. The systematic removal of materials that are in poor physical condition, contain obsolete, misleading, or superseded information, or are no longer of relevance to the interests of the community is an essential part of maintaining an effective, relevant, and vibrant library collection. Items that have not circulated at all for 3-5 years will be strong candidates for weeding due to space constraints. Older items with low circulation will be considered as well. Items in poor condition will be weeded from the collection and replaced as necessary. "Classic" titles should be replaced whenever possible; other titles should be replaced if they circulated well and/or the budget allows. If subject areas will be depleted by the weeding process, priority will be given to collecting new material in that area.

Any materials discarded will be screened through the Better World Books portal, sold at the Friends Book Sale or, in the case of juvenile and young adult titles, donated to classrooms in the area before being donated to local charities or discarded altogether. Circulation will be evaluated using analytics reports compiled by the director and by SAILS.

Procedures for Dealing with Challenged Materials

Any patron or community member who lives in Rochester can request that materials in the collection be reconsidered. The following steps will be taken when a patron has a concern:

1. If the patron feels comfortable, they should discuss the matter with the Library Director, who is responsible for material selection. They might also bring the matter to the attention of a member of the Board of Trustees. Many concerns may be alleviated if the patron understands the collection policy and selection process.
2. The patron should fill out a "Request for Reconsideration" if they believe the material should be removed or restricted in some way.
3. Copies of the form, along with the material in question, will be forwarded to the Board of Trustees for their evaluation and consideration.
4. At the next meeting of the Board, the Library Director and Board will review the complaint and the material in light of the library's selection policy, and taking into account the ALA's *Freedom to Read* statement and the *Library Bill of Rights*.
5. After a decision has been made regarding the material, the complainant will be notified of the Board's decision and the material will be handled according to that decision. The complainant may appeal the decision based on the guidelines set forth in the ALA's Intellectual Freedom Manual.

Adopted by the Joseph H. Plumb Memorial Library Board of Trustees on January 1998

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