

Section 10: Materials Selection

10.1 **Philosophy and Goals.** The mission of the Rowley Public Library is to make available a broad range of library materials, to provide up-to-date and accurate information, and to offer services and programs desired by the community of Rowley.

The library supports the ALA Freedom to Read Statement.⁷

10.2 **What Is Provided.** The Rowley Library provides books, periodicals, printed matter, and audiovisual media for all ages that seek information, educational materials, or entertainment.

- Members of the staff select library materials after consulting professional review media. Staff members consult with each other to review the needs of the community as documented in circulation statistics and requests. Final responsibility for the purchase of materials resides with the Director of the Library.
- The Rowley Public Library subscribes to the principles of intellectual freedom as stated in the "Library Bill of Rights," a document issued by the American Library Association. Included in this statement is the commitment to honor the rights of an individual to use the library regardless of origin, age, background, or views.
- Children and adults are equally free to use the entire library and to borrow all materials in the circulating collection.

10.3 **Objectives & Criteria for Selection.** The library strives to maintain its permanent collection by acquiring material that is of historical, literary, or practical worth. Selection is considered a judgmental and interpretive process involving: a general knowledge of the subject, a familiarity with the materials in the collection, and recognition of other needs of the community.

- Library staff attempt to meet the patrons' demands. Material is bought that is both pertinent and timely. Books that have current political and social significance are given high priority for selection. The Library makes a special effort to obtain material representing all sides of controversial issues. Staff members look to see that the author presents material accurately, clearly, and in a readable manner.
- Materials in a variety of formats are considered for inclusion in the Library's collection, including books, serials, and other print materials; and audiovisual media.
- The Library leaves to parents the job of determining what a child may view or read.
- Patrons may request items for purchase, decision to purchase or not may depend on availability of the item in shared network collections, or other formats.

10.4 **Responsibility for Selection.** The Board of Trustees formulates policies for the selection of all materials within the broad framework of the objectives and purposes of the Library. The Trustees delegate the responsibility of implementing these policies through materials selection to the Library Director.

⁷ "The Freedom to Read Statement", American Library Association, July 26, 2006
<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement> (Accessed September 5, 2025)

The Library Director will ensure that the library staff purchase materials in conformance with these policies for selection. No Library employee shall be dismissed for the selection of library materials made in good faith and in accordance with this policy.

10.5 Gifts and Memorials. Donations of books and materials to the library will be considered, with the understanding that the same criteria of selection will be applied before accepting donated materials. If donated items are accepted, it is with the understanding that such donations are final, that materials become the exclusive property of the Library and that the Library controls their disposition in whatever way is deemed appropriate. The Library cannot guarantee that any gift will be part of the collection or that it will be kept permanently. Those materials not selected will be refused, sold, or discarded.

- No donations that are accompanied by qualifying instructions as to disposition, housing, or use will be accepted.
- The Library welcomes monetary gifts for the purchase of books and other library materials. Those making monetary donations may wish to recommend how their contributions are to be used. The Library will comply with such requests whenever possible. The Library reserves the right, however, to commit donations to services and projects in keeping with its priorities.
- The Library also accepts monetary contributions for materials to be purchased as designated memorials. Gifts of any size are welcomed for this.

10.6 Weeding. Systematic removal of materials no longer useful to the collection is essential in maintaining the purposes and quality of resources. Items will be discarded if they become superseded, outdated, or in poor condition.

10.7 Controversial Selections. Any Rowley resident who desires may express his or her objections to particular Library materials by completing a Challenge of Library Materials form, included as an Appendix in this policy manual. After the form is completed, it will be brought to the attention of the Library Director, who will review the concern about the item being challenged. The Library Director will then respond to the person making the objection. Any remaining objections may be submitted to the Board of Library Trustees in writing.