

*policy statement on*

# COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

REVISED November 16, 2023

The Library selects materials for citizens of East Baton Rouge Parish based on the interests and needs of the community in adherence with the Library's mission, vision, and values.

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy on collection development for the East Baton Rouge Parish Library is to guide in the selection, retention, and removal of materials and to inform the public about the principles upon which selections are made, based on the East Baton Rouge Parish Library Mission Statement.

## **MISSION**

*The Library is a community service organization that provides access and connects people to information, resources, materials, technology, and experiences to make a positive difference in their lives.*

## **VISION**

*The Library strengthens its role as an essential partner in the success of the community as a center of learning, knowledge, literacy, communication, culture, creativity, discovery, and enjoyment for all people.*

## **VALUES**

*Community, Opportunity, Inclusion, Learning, and Service*

## **OBJECTIVES OF SELECTION**

The Library selects materials for citizens of East Baton Rouge Parish based on the interests and needs of the community in adherence with the Library's mission, vision, and values.

The Library strives to ensure a free and equal opportunity to all residents of the Parish, both children and adults, to secure reliable materials, information, and professional guidance, which will enable them to enhance and broaden their cultural, educational, vocational, and recreational lives, and thereby to contribute to the development and enrichment of the community.

The Library supports the principles of the [Freedom to Read Statement](#) and [Library Bill of Rights](#) and provides, within financial and spatial limitations, a large, responsive and stimulating collection of material to assist in the personal and social development of citizens irrespective of age, race, religion, national background, or economic, social, or professional status. All materials are selected by this Library in accordance with these basic objectives.

## **RESPONSIBILITY FOR MATERIALS SELECTION**

The ultimate responsibility for selecting Library materials rests with the Library Director, who operates within the framework of policies established by the Library Board of Control. The Director delegates selection responsibilities to appropriate professional staff. Other staff members and the general public are welcomed to make recommendations.

The Library Board of Control adopts as part of its policy the following paragraphs from the [Library Bill of Rights](#):

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the Library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

## **PRINCIPLES OF SELECTION**

Principles of selection are shaped by the changing needs of the citizens in East Baton Rouge Parish and require evaluation on a continual basis. Materials are evaluated as a whole and not on the basis of a particular passage or passages. In compliance with “equal protection” granted under federal law in the [14<sup>th</sup> Amendment](#), the Library does not exclude or remove materials from the Library on the basis of race, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, or social, political or religious beliefs.

The Library develops collections aimed at the special needs and interests of children (ages 0-11), tweens (ages 12-14), and teens (ages 15-17), including materials curated to assist parents in discussing sensitive or challenging topics with their children. The Library does not act “in loco parentis (in the place of a parent).” The reading and viewing activities of youth under the age of 18 are the responsibility of parents or guardians. Materials selected primarily for children and adolescents are marked accordingly and located in designated areas of the Library.

The Library believes that individuals should have access to more than one point of view and that the individuals' personal tastes will dictate what they choose to read. It follows that free access to different points of view must be offered. The Library recognizes that many materials are controversial, and that any given item may offend some people. Serious works which present an honest picture of some problem or aspect of life will at times be controversial, but they will not be excluded because of visual format, coarse language, or frankness.

### ***A. Scope of Collection***

The East Baton Rouge Parish Library's collection of approximately two million books, audiovisual items, and other materials provides a wide range of literary, cultural, educational, informational and recreational materials for people of all ages. Collections include popular and in-demand materials as well as special formats, such as large print books, government documents, foreign language materials, test and study guides, financial, tax and business information, school and career information, consumer, health and medical information, and materials about Louisiana.

The variety of formats collected include, but are not limited to:

- Print: books including graphic novels, documents, magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, and maps.
- Audiovisual Media: videos on DVD and Blu-ray, books on CD, music on compact disc, digital audio players, interactive audio visual devices, and Microforms. When possible, the Library applies the ratings assigned by the [Motion Picture Association of America](#) to films.
- Electronic Media: databases, software, electronic books, electronic audiobooks, electronic magazines and newspapers, streaming videos and music. The Library also provides [filtered access to the Internet](#). Selected Internet sites are curated on the Library's website.
- Other: multimedia kits, board games, makerspace equipment, family activity kits, art, and HotSpots.

## B. *Selection Criteria*

The following criteria are taken into account in establishing the overall value of a title for all materials selected including gifts, staff and patron recommendations, and self-published titles:

- Support of the Library's mission, vision, values and goals.
- Importance of subject matter to the collection.
- Items that fit the cultural needs and community standards of the area and / or represent a significant trend, genre, or culture.
- Local or community relevance.
- Availability and accessibility of the same material in OCLC (the international bibliographic utility), or through other resources such as Interlibrary Loan.
- Absence of subject matter in the collection.
- Public demand, popularity, and interest.
- Reputation and significance of the author, publisher, or producer.
- Quality of production including design, illustrations, organization, and style.
- Price and availability.
- Historical value, literary merit, and social significance.
- Relevance to special collections.
- Attention given by critics, reviewers, professional material selection aids (including special bibliographies or indexes), nominations/receipts for major awards or prizes, and the public.

Items excluded from the Library collection include the following:

- Academic Textbooks or highly specialized or technical research materials.
- Resources whose sole function is to support a school curriculum including home school or any other course of study by individual organizations or institutions.
- Expensive or out-of-date formats no longer collected.
- Prohibitively old or out-of-print materials that are available through Interlibrary Loan (ILL).
- Poorly printed, produced, or bound materials

## C. *Special Collections*

In addition, the Baton Rouge Room collection preserves and documents the history of East Baton Rouge Parish and provides a broad scope of information about local news, events and businesses. Other Special Collections include the Black Heritage, Genealogy, Parenting Shelf, and Grants Collections.

## D. *Gifts and Donations*

The Library accepts donations in suitable formats from members of the community. Any donations become the property of the Library and may or may not be accepted into the Library collection, according to the Library's standards of selection methodology and criteria, or given to the Patrons of the Public Library, the Library's friends group, responsible for the [Recycled Reads Sales](#). Funds from book sales are used to purchase materials which meet the Library's selection criteria and pay for programs supporting the Library's mission, vision, values, and goals.

## E. *Self-Published Materials*

In most cases, the Library will not purchase self-published material without reviews from established review sources. Exceptions may be made for materials of local interest that meet the Library's selection methodology and criteria.

## F. *Patron Recommendations*

The Library's patrons are encouraged to recommend the purchase of library materials. Patrons may submit a [Patron Recommendation Form](#) online at [www.ebrpl.com](http://www.ebrpl.com). These requests are considered for purchase according to the Library's selection methodology and criteria.

## MAINTENANCE OF COLLECTION

Systematic examination of materials in terms of usefulness to the public as defined in this policy is necessary in order to maintain relevant resources. The Library regularly removes materials to ensure that the collection continues to meet patrons' needs. Materials are often removed when they become worn, obsolete, unused, or are duplicate items or old editions that are no longer necessary. Professional staff assess the need for replacing materials that are damaged, destroyed or lost. Materials are not automatically replaced. Decisions are based on need, demand, budget, and availability. Removed materials are recycled or donated.

### STATEMENT OF CONCERN: Regarding Reconsideration of Materials

The Library offers a wide range of materials to meet the diverse needs of patrons throughout the community. The selection of library books and materials is predicated on the library customers' right to read, and similarly, their freedom from censorship by others. Many titles are controversial, and any given item may offend some people. Selections for this Library will not, however, be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the material in relation to the building of the collection and to serving the interests of the readers.

The Library holds censorship to be a purely individual matter and declares that—while all are free to reject for themselves books and other materials of which they do not approve—they cannot exercise this right of censorship to restrict the freedom of others.

Library patrons with concerns about a particular item are asked to complete, in its entirety, the [Patron's Statement of Concern Form](#), available at any East Baton Rouge Parish Library location and online at [www.ebrpl.com](http://www.ebrpl.com). It will be reviewed carefully within the guidelines established by the Library's selection methodology and criteria. Items under review will remain in circulation.

#### A. *General Requests for Reconsideration*

1. All requests for reconsideration shall be submitted in writing to the Library using the [Patron's Statement of Concern Form](#).
2. Requests for reconsideration may be made by any library patron. *Library patron* is defined as "a person residing in the parish in which the parish or municipal library is located who has reached the age of majority and who holds a library card from the Library." [LA R.S. 25:225 B (2)].
3. The Library shall make a written determination and notify the library patron.
4. Appeal(s) of these determinations can be made to the Library Board of Control within thirty (30) days of the notification of the determination.

#### B. *Requests for Reconsideration Related to LA R.S. 25:225: Minors' Access to Sexually Explicit Materials*

1. All requests for reconsideration shall be submitted in writing to the Library using the [Patron's Statement of Concern Form](#).
2. Requests for reconsideration may be made by any library patron. *Library patron* is defined in Article VIII(A)(2) in the preceding section.
3. Pursuant to LA R.S. 25:225, all requests for reconsideration on the basis of the material being sexually explicit as defined in the statute shall be reviewed by the Library Board of Control in an open meeting.
4. The Library Board of Control shall determine whether the library material meets the definition of sexually explicit material by majority vote in an open meeting pursuant to the requirements of LA R.S. 42:11 et seq.
5. The Library Board of Control shall make a written determination and notify the library patron.
6. The decision of the Library Board of Control is final.

*The East Baton Rouge Parish Collection Development Policy was adopted by the East Baton Rouge Parish Library Board of Control on September 28, 2004.*

*Revised March 16, 2023  
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