Collection and Resource Management

A collection of materials is central to the purpose of every library district. A library collection must serve a diverse range of existing and potential interests, needs and demands, and the nature of a public library’s collection represents a compact with the community it serves. Communities change over time, and library collections must be responsive to change. No set of standards can or should try to determine the values local libraries and their communities use to guide collection management choices; however, standards can be a powerful tool with which to set guidelines for good practice.

The collection should be conceived as a living entity. Decisions to add or withdraw an item from a library district’s collection must be subject to the same criteria. Each item in a collection represents a judgment in terms of its quality and usefulness, its contribution to the balance of the collection, and its responsiveness to community need and demand. In addition, decisions about the material owned by a library district must be made within a context of knowledge concerning material that can be accessed by and provided to the public, but need not necessarily be owned by or physically present in the library district. The primary purpose of these standards and guidelines is to provide a means by which librarians can explicitly define and describe their collection management practices.

Standards

Collection Management

1. The library district has a written collection management policy that is based on the library district’s strategic plan and services. The collection management policy is board approved, based on the principles articulated in the ALA Intellectual Freedom Manual, and is available to the public for comment and suggestions. The plan should include policies and procedures for:
   a. Selection and weeding
   b. Conservation/preservation
   c. Procedures for handling requests for reconsideration of materials
   d. Procedures for handling gifts and donations
   e. Procedures for non-circulating items

2. The collection management policy is reviewed at least every three years.

3. The collection is continually updated to meet the changing needs, interests and ethnic and cultural diversity of the community.
4. Weeding is an essential element of collection development that ensures the library’s materials are relevant and current. Items in the collection are evaluated continually for retention, replacement or withdrawal according to written selection and weeding criteria within the library district’s collection management policy.

5. The library district utilizes resources that are available statewide or through other libraries and institutions.

6. The library district has a disaster plan outlining procedures to follow in case of fire, water or other damage to the collection.

7. The library district has a preservation plan for rare book and local history collections.

8. Annual circulation statistics are tracked in order to establish per capita and turnover rates for items in the collection.

9. The library district’s collection is cataloged, organized and displayed in order to facilitate access.

**Materials**

10. The library district collects material in a variety of formats and media supported by a variety of information technologies. The library district has a written policy statement concerning priorities and limitations with regard to format, media and technology that is specific to its own local community and collection management policy.

11. The library district maintains a current and adequate collection of materials representing a wide variety of viewpoints and subjects in print, electronic and other appropriate formats.

12. The library district allocates money in the budget for the purchase of library materials in a variety of formats based on the collection management plan.

13. Materials expenditures are between 15% and 20% of the library district’s operating budget.

14. The library district participates in interlibrary loan as both a lender and a borrower. Its item records comply with machine readable standards and current national practices.

15. All library materials are accessible to all patrons, unless restricted by law or library policy.
16. The library district orders at regular intervals throughout the year to ensure a steady flow of new materials to the public.

**Guidelines**

___1. The collection management policy allows the library district to support clearly identified service priorities and defines levels of collection management effort by specific subject areas or other needed specific categories. *Standards #1, #10, #11*

___2. The library does not undertake extensive curricular support unless the library district carefully defines its support of formal education within its strategic plan. *Standard #1*

___3. The library district uses *CREW: A Weeding Manual for Modern Libraries*, or other recognized methods to maintain the currency and responsiveness of the collection to community needs. *Standards #3, #4, #16*

___4. The library district has a written policy specifying that all requests for purchase or gifts to the library must meet the library district’s selection criteria in order to be added to the collection. *Standard #1*

___5. Materials are selected in anticipation of, as well as in response to, requests from library users. The library district provides a mechanism for patrons to suggest items for purchase. *Standards #1, #11, #16*

___6. The library district has a written policy detailing procedures for responding to requests that material be withdrawn from the collection. This policy is based on the Library Bill of Rights, the ALA Freedom to Read Statement, the ALA Freedom to View Statement and on other relevant documents in the ALA Intellectual Freedom Manual. *Standard #1*

___7. The library district provides online databases as appropriate to meet the needs of its community. *Standards #3, #5, #11*

___8. The library district maintains a collection of media in various current formats, including physical and downloadable materials, as well as other non-print materials. *Standards #10, #11*

___9. The library district joins OCLC and/or statewide resource sharing consortiums. The library district utilizes interlibrary loan or statewide databases to fill patrons’ needs on topics for which the library has not purchased material. If the library finds they
must repeatedly request interlibrary loan material on the same topic, they consider purchasing material for their own collection on the topic. Standards #5, #14

10. A circulation policy is in place that specifies borrowing eligibility. Standard #5