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SECTION V: COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

Part 1. Introduction and Philosophy

1.1 Purpose

Chestatee Regional Library System enhances our community's quality of life by offering lifelong learning opportunities and recreational materials to everyone in Dawson and Lumpkin Counties. The Library provides a wide range of materials and resources in a variety of formats in support of this mission. The purpose of this document is to describe how resources for the library are selected, maintained, and evaluated; to inform the public about the principles of material selection; and ensure that funds received by the Library System are spent in accordance with the System's mission statement.

1.2 General Objectives

The Library provides quality library service, within the budgetary and policy limitations, to all citizens of Dawson and Lumpkin counties. The Board will periodically evaluate the selection policies to ensure that the needs of the residents are being met.

1.3 Philosophy of Selection

The Chestatee Regional Library System Board of Trustees endorses the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights and its interpretations, the Freedom to Read Statement, and the Freedom to View Statement. These documents are included at the end of this section. The library upholds the right of the individual to secure information even though the content may be controversial, unorthodox or unacceptable to others. The existence of a particular viewpoint in the collection is an expression of the library's policy of intellectual freedom and access to information, not an endorsement of the particular point of view. Library materials are not marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents. No library material will be removed from its assigned shelf space or otherwise sequestered. Materials selected under the Collection Development Policy are considered protected under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution.

The Library staff does not serve in loco parentis. Decisions concerning children's use of specific library materials and/or electronic resources are the responsibility of their own parents or guardians.

1.4 Scope of the Collection

The collection of the Chestatee Regional Library System is intended to meet the diverse recreational and lifelong learning needs of the community. The scope of the collection is intended to offer a choice of format, treatment, and level of difficulty so that most library user needs, regardless of age, can be met within the current materials budget. Acquiring current materials of wide-ranging interest to the general public is emphasized. Genealogy and local history collections are maintained by the library to enhance and supplement its services. The collection is not archival except for local history collections.

The **Genealogy and Georgia History Collection** supports the basic research needs of the local community and provides regional genealogical and historical information. The primary focus of the collection is information about Dawson County and Lumpkin County, their predecessor counties, and ethnic and regional materials that provide

background information related to early settlers and their migration routes to this area. This information is available in various formats, including print, microform, and digital.

Not included in this collection are state and regional materials unrelated to genealogical research or with little or no historical significance, as determined by the library.

Materials for this collection may be added through purchase, photocopy, gift or trade from individuals, businesses, and institutions. The library may refer or reject materials unsuitable for the collection because the materials fall outside the scope of the collection or present preservation concerns.

The **Children's Collection** serves children from birth through the sixth grade and adults involved with children such as parents, teachers, group leaders, and students. It includes materials for different reading, listening, and viewing levels; various recreational and subject interests. The Children's print collection, like all of literature, often reflects reality. As such it may include material which is controversial or offensive to some.

The **Young Adult Collection** includes recreational reading particularly appropriate to adolescents ages 12 through 18. It is not intended to be a comprehensive collection serving all the needs and interests of young adults, nor is it the library's intention that young adults should be confined to the use of this material. Materials are selected for this collection to broaden the horizons of young adults and help them to cope with the problems of adolescence. To fulfill these needs, the collection will inevitably include materials on controversial topics

Materials Not Collected: Because resources are limited, the Chestatee Regional Library System does not purchase materials whose sole function is to support a school curriculum or any other course of study prescribed by specific organizations or institutions.

1.5 Formats

Library resources are available in a variety of formats. Multiple formats are often required to accommodate the special needs of the community. The library's selection criteria are applied to all formats regardless of format chosen. Additional factors governing the choice of format include anticipated use, storage requirements, accessibility, technical support, and cost.

Part 2. Materials Selection

2.1 Selection of Materials

Selection of library materials and resources rests with the Library Director, who operates within the framework of policies approved by the Chestatee Regional Library System Board of Trustees. The Library Director implements this policy and assigns professional staff members the responsibility for materials selection for all system libraries. Professional staff is qualified for this activity by reason of education, training, and experience. Suggestions for additions to the collection by other staff members and the public are encouraged.

Selection of library materials and resources shall be made on the basis of their value in terms of interest, information and enlightenment of all people of the community. No

library material or resource shall be excluded because of the race, nationality, religion, gender or the political or social views of the author.

The library staff and trustees recognize the changing nature of the Internet and provide access to Internet resources within this understanding. The library staff selects electronic resources, which may change in format or content after selection. When selection involves the provision of access to a remote resource, such as an Internet-accessible database or a World Wide Web site, the content of the resource may not always conform to the Library's selection criteria. The library staff will review the content of such resources on a regular basis to assess their continued value in terms of interest and information for the people of the community.

2.2 Selection Criteria

The following general criteria are used in selecting resources for the collection. Not every item needs to meet all criteria, but should meet one or more of the criteria. Selection criteria are applied to all resources, regardless of format, selected for the library.

- Current and anticipated community needs, interests, and demands
- Critical reviews from reputable sources
- Reputation of the author, illustrator, editor, publisher, producer or performer
- Receipt or nomination for major awards or prizes
- Suitability of subject, style, and format for the intended audience
- Relationship to the existing collection
- Library's other holdings in subject area
- Quality of the physical format
- Availability of the material or information elsewhere
- Affordability
- Overall literary quality

Selection tools include professional and trade journals, subject bibliographies, publishers' catalogs and promotional materials, reviews from reputable sources, and lists of recommended titles. Suggestions from library users are reviewed and purchased according to the selection criteria and availability of funds.

In most cases, the library will not purchase self-published materials that are not reviewed in established review journals. Exceptions may be made for self-published materials of local interest that meet the selection criteria.

Part 3. Other Issues

3.1 Collection Maintenance

Professional staff reviews the collection on an ongoing basis with the goal of maintaining the quality and vitality of library resources. This process of collection management incorporates the use of our output measures, circulation reports, database use statistics and other statistical information for continuous collection evaluation. Worn, damaged, and dated materials are weeded from the collection on a regular basis. This includes memorial items. Materials may also be withdrawn if they are not used or are superseded by a new addition or a more authoritative work on the same subject.

Library resources that are discarded may be sold through book sales sponsored by the Friends of the Library organizations or may be given to non-profit community groups or organizations.

The Library does not automatically replace all materials that are withdrawn due to loss or damage. Several factors will be considered, including:

- whether the item is still available and can be replaced
- whether another item serves the same purpose
- whether there is sufficient demand to replace the item
- whether the item has historic significance
- whether the item is available from another source

3.2 Copyright

The Chestatee Regional Library System adheres to the intent of the general revision of the copyright law, PL94-553. Signs are posted near photocopiers with general copyright warnings. It is the patron's responsibility to determine whether material is protected by the copyright law and to adhere to that law.

3.3 Gifts

Gifts are accepted, but are subject to the same selection criteria that are applied to materials purchased with library funds. Once a gift is accepted by the library, it becomes the property of the library, to be used or disposed of in accordance with the policies established by the Board of Trustees. Gift materials not added to the collection may be sold by the Friends of the Library in their bookstore or book sales. A receipt for donations to be completed by the donor will be provided upon request.

The library does not provide evaluations or monetary appraisals of gifts for tax deductions or other purposes. Acceptance of a gift that has been appraised does not constitute the library's endorsement of that appraisal. The library does not accept gifts of any kind on temporary or permanent loan.

3.4 Donated Periodicals, Subscriptions, Continuations

Acceptance of gift subscriptions to the periodical collection is at the discretion of library staff. If a periodical gift subscription is one that the library needs, it must then be determined whether or not the ongoing materials budget can support the purchase when the gift ends. If it cannot be supported, then the gift may be rejected. Anticipated use and adequate space to house the periodicals are also considered.

3.5 Intellectual Freedom and First Amendment Rights

It is the library's responsibility to collect materials that serve a wide variety of ages, ethnic groups and educational levels, with content representing various points of view on all issues without endorsement, restriction or prejudice. The Library subscribes to the Library Bill of Rights (as amended January 23, 1980), the Freedom to Read Statement (as amended June 30, 2004), and the Freedom to View Statement (as amended in 1989). These documents are included at the end of this section.

Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of their contents, and no library material will be removed from its assigned shelf space or otherwise sequestered.

Responsibility for children's reading rests with parents or legal guardians. Selection of library materials will not be inhibited by the possibility that books may inadvertently come into the possession of children.

When a patron objects to an item in the collection, the staff member receiving the complaint should listen respectfully to the objection, making no judgmental comments about the item in question or the complaint. If the patron wishes to file a formal complaint, the discussion should be turned over to the supervisor on duty, who should:

1. Provide a copy of the collection development policy.
2. Provide a "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" form (attached).
3. Assure the patron that the material will be reviewed by the Library Director and the professional staff.
4. Notify the patron that he/she will receive a letter from the Library Director describing the results of this review.
5. Send the completed form and the material in question to the Library Director. The patron may mail the form if so desired.

The professional staff will gather available reviews on the material and write an opinion of the material, including a recommendation for the library's response to the patron's request, and the Director will send a letter informing the patron of the results of the review. A copy of the patron's reconsideration request form will accompany the letter. A copy of this letter will be sent to the Chair of the Chestatee Regional Library System Board of Trustees.

If the patron is not satisfied with the results of the review, he or she may elect to request in writing that the material be reviewed by the Chestatee Regional Library System Board of Trustees. Upon receipt of this request, the Library Director will place the issue on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. The decision of the Board will be final. During the review process, the Library Director will be the sole spokesperson for the Chestatee Regional Library System. No other staff or Board member should comment on the material or the complaint until the conclusion of the review process.

All materials selected under the Collection Development Policy are considered constitutionally protected until such time as they are determined unprotected by a judicial action in courts of jurisdiction and after all appeals have been exhausted. In the event that a patron charges that a particular item is not protected under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, the burden of proof rests with the complainant. Material under question, which meets the criteria for selection set forth in the Collection Development Policy, will remain in the active collection until such judicial determination is made.

Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- 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.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 18, 1948.
Amended February 2, 1961, and January 23, 1980,
inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996,
by the ALA Council.

The Freedom to Read Statement

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label “controversial” views, to distribute lists of “objectionable” books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as citizens devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary citizen, by exercising critical judgment, will accept the good and reject the bad. The censors, public and private, assume that they should determine what is good and what is bad for their fellow citizens.

We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they need the help of censors to assist them in this task. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be “protected” against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings. The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. *It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox or unpopular with the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. *There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept with any expression the prejudgment of a label characterizing it or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for the citizen. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive.

7. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all citizens the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953; revised January 28, 1972, January 16, 1991, July 12, 2000, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee.

Freedom to View Statement

The **FREEDOM TO VIEW**, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the **First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States**. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore these principles are affirmed:

1. To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantees of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association (formerly the Educational Film Library Association) and was adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.

Endorsed by the ALA Council January 10, 1990

CHESTATEE REGIONAL LIBRARY SYSTEM

Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

Title _____
—

Author _____ Book _____ Magazine _____ Other _____
—

1. How was the material brought to your attention?

2. Have you read or reviewed the entire item?

3. What objections do you have to the material? Please cite specific pages and passages. Are your objections moral, political, religious or aesthetic? (Use back of page if necessary.)

4. What is good about the material?

5. What reviews have you read or heard about the material?

6. What do you think is the theme of the material and the intention of the author?

7. To what readers, do you feel, is the material objectionable? Please be specific.

8. How would you answer people who feel that the material is important and should be in the library?

Date _____ Signature _____
—

Telephone _____ Name (please
print) _____

Address _____
—

Name of organization if you represent a group of
people _____

Mail to: Director
 Chestatee Regional Library System
 342 Allen St.
 Dawsonville, GA 30534