

Congregation of Moses Fisher Library

Collection Development Policy

Fisher Library's Mission Statement

To promote a readership that views the collection as a tool to gather knowledge, explore new experiences, develop personal tastes, and enjoy reading for pleasure.

General Collection Development Guidelines

Purpose of the Fisher Library Collection:

The Fisher Library Collection is divided into two major sub-collections: a children's collection and an adult collection. The library's children's collection contains items of Jewish content intended for children from birth through the twelfth grade in alignment with the library's mission and the OKCJS curriculum. The purpose of the adult collection is to enrich and support Jewish life and values by including titles with either specifically Judaic content or that contain Jewish viewpoints. Together, these collections should reflect the many ages, origins, interests, and experiences of the greater Kalamazoo and Congregation of Moses communities we serve.

Objective of Selection

The items in the collection are to be used both in the pursuit of personal enjoyment, knowledge, and for academic achievement and are selected with the above purpose in mind.

Selection Making and Responsibility of Selection

Resources for Selection Making

The responsibility of selection ultimately falls to the library director. However, there are several resources referenced in order to make selection decisions.

- Children's collection: Library Director works in conjunction with the OKCJS faculty and administration to make thoughtful, student-centered choices.
- Adult collection: Library Director is open to suggestions from synagogue staff and membership.

Additionally, the Library Director will refer to trusted outside sources for title recommendations and reviews, which may include:

- Association of Jewish Libraries (AJL)
- Jewish Review of Books
- Jewish Book Council
- New York Times Book Review

The Library Director will also make decisions based on professional expertise and experience.

Selection Criteria

- Materials in a variety of formats must be available for readers of all ages, abilities, and interests.
- The content of the materials should be of high quality and artistic value, and/or the potential user appeal must be high.
- Non-fiction content must come from credible sources, and include accurate, reliable, and current information.
- In the children's collection, all materials must be appropriate for a school setting and have educational, social, or developmental significance, and all materials in the adult collection must be appropriate for a synagogue setting.
- Materials should reflect a range of Jewish beliefs, culture, and values so that members of the community feel represented in the collection and are able to find materials that will aid in understanding the viewpoints, beliefs, and experiences of others.
- The collections should be balanced in terms of subject areas, formats, and fictional and non-fictional content.

Selection Making

- The Library Director will make selections that are in the best interest of the school and synagogue community, and avoid any personal opinions or biases.
- Additions to the library will remain within budget, be cost effective, durable, and fulfill a specific need within the collection.
- Lost or destroyed materials will be re-assessed based on the above criteria before purchasing a replacement.
- Materials may be selected that do not meet the criteria above if the Library Director decides that the goals and needs of the collection, the library, OKCJS, and/or the synagogue community will be met.
- The Library Director will make primary purchases for the library twice a year – once in August, before the beginning of the school year and once in January, before the spring holidays. Purchases may be made at other times of the year if budget permits. Anyone wishing to make requests for purchases should keep this time frame in mind, and request items as many weeks in advance as possible.

Weeding

Overview

- The Library Director collects data on all materials existing in, added to, or removed from the collection. After this data is reviewed, the Library Director will plan to weed (remove) items from the collection that meet the criteria below. Weeding may also occur on a case-by-case basis at any point during the year.
- Any weeded material will be removed from the catalog and from circulation and clearly marked as withdrawn.
- After an item has been weeded, the Library Director will decide where to place that item next, which may include the Library's Annual Book Sale or donation.

Weeding Criteria

Items will be weeded from the collection if:

- The content is inaccurate, outdated, offensive, unreliable, or inappropriate for the school and synagogue community.
- The physical condition is poor, unattractive, or beyond the librarians' ability to repair or rebind.
- The title has not been used or circulated in five years or more.
- (Children's collection) The content is no longer relevant to OKCJS curriculum.
- There are duplicate copies of the same title when one copy can continue to meet circulation needs.

Donations

All donations will be subject to the same criteria listed in the above Collection Development Policy. Parents and synagogue members interested in donating used or new books and other supplies to the Fisher Library may ask the Library Director or may access the library's Amazon wishlist for specific titles and items. The link to the wishlist is available upon request.

Donations of used items must be:

- Of Jewish content
- In good condition (no rips, cracked bindings, missing or scribbled pages, etc)

The Library Director reserves the right to designate any donations that do not meet the library's needs for the Annual Library Book Sale or charitable donation. Bibles or prayer books in poor condition may be placed in the synagogue's geniza.

Challenges

Overview

- The Fisher Library strictly adheres to the Library Bill of Rights, created by the American Library Association (and available at <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>), which dictates the rights of the library and its users and emphasizes freedom of choice.
- Although the Library Director encourages children to make choices that are age and reading level appropriate, no one rule exists for reading materials for children of a particular age. Reading recommendations are potentially based the student's abilities, interests, needs, or by the particular circumstance.

Challenges *(continued)*

The Library Director will occasionally restrict access to specific topics (e.g. Holocaust) or titles to an entire class, grade, or individual. All children's titles have classifications and/or stickers to help in this selection process, though age levels are approximations:

- YA – Young Adult, for ages 10-18
- Mature – Book content for ages 14 and above
- 10+ -- Book content for ages 10-14
- JA – Junior Advanced, for ages 7-10 (generally chapter books)
- J – Junior, for ages 4-7 (generally picture books)
- E – Easy, for ages birth-3 (generally board books)

If families wish their child to focus on certain topics or book formats, the Library Director is happy to provide that child with suggestions, but the Library Director will not explicitly instruct a student to check out a title against the child's wish. If the Library Director has a question about a book selection that a child has made, that child's parents or guardians will be contacted.

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