



EAST BRIDGEWATER PUBLIC LIBRARY

32 Union Street

East Bridgewater, Massachusetts 02333

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Collection Development Policy

Mission Statement

The East Bridgewater Public Library serves the informational, educational, cultural, and recreational needs of our community by providing access to professional staff and the highest levels of materials, programs, and library services in a welcoming environment.

Purpose

The Collection Development Policy is a Library's foundational policy document. It informs the public about the goals and methods used for selection and retention of library materials, and it guides staff decision-making in the allocation of resources. This policy reinforces the Library's commitment to Intellectual Freedom and access to diverse perspectives and it ensures that the collection will support and reflect the needs of the East Bridgewater community.

Community Profile

For over 12,000 years, this region was inhabited by the Pokanoket Band of the Wampanoag Tribe. The Wampanoag called this region "Satucket" which means "place of the river" or "place where the rivers meet". English colonists moved here after a 1649 agreement between colonial and native authorities; it was incorporated as the East Precinct of Bridgewater in 1723 and was incorporated as the Town of East Bridgewater in 1823.

Today, East Bridgewater has a population of 14,602. The median household income is \$133,853, the per capita income is \$61,193, and 4.6% of the community lives in poverty. Over 88% of the town identifies as White, 2.2% Black, 4% Hispanic/Latino, and 7% two or more races. Over 95% of the residents are high school graduates and 34% have Bachelor's degrees or higher. Just over 21% of the population are under 18 years old, 63% are between 18 and 65 years, and almost 16% are over 65 years old. English is not spoken at home in 6.2% of households. 3.1% of residents are foreign-born.

Collection Scope

The Library includes a collection of physical materials and digital resources. Core physical resources include books, magazines, DVDs, and newspapers. Specialized resources include Library of Things and age-specific resources in the Children's Department and Teen Zone.

Electronic resources are available through our membership in the SAILS Library Network, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, and the Massachusetts Library System, in addition to resources purchased directly by the Library. These resources include databases, ebooks, audiobooks, streaming media, and genealogy resources.

Beyond East Bridgewater's Collection

Patrons are able to request and borrow books and resources from other libraries in the SAILS network, as well as libraries throughout the state via the Commonwealth Catalog. These services are free and resources, when available, will be delivered to the East Bridgewater Public Library.

Responsibility

The Director of Library Services is responsible for the Library's collections. Professional Library staff assist the Director by recommending materials allocations, selecting materials, and removing materials from the collection. In addition, the Director of Library Services is subject to the Library policies established by the East Bridgewater Board of Library Trustees.

Selection and Evaluation Guidelines

The East Bridgewater Public Library allocates resources toward materials that anticipate and respond to the needs and wants of the community. The Library strives to maintain and ensure access to a collection of materials that represent a wide range of opinions, ideas, and information that will enlighten, enrich, and entertain the minds and spirits of the East Bridgewater community. Materials are acquired in multiple formats when appropriate, including print, audiovisual, and digital resources.

The following general criteria are used when selecting materials for the collection:

- Relevance to the interests and needs of the community, both present and potential
- Critical reviews, awards won, and current or anticipated demand
- Local, historical, and/or cultural significance of the author or subject
- Relevance to the collection's strengths or weaknesses
- Reputation and qualifications of the author, publisher, or producer, with preference generally given to titles vetted by the editing and publishing industry
- Accuracy, timeliness, diversity of viewpoint, literary merit, contribution to the field of study
- Publication date, price, availability, and materials budget; cost in relation to the enhancement of the overall collection
- Relevance to early literacy; responsiveness to school-age and teen interest; scholastic support and enrichment
- Format's durability, relevance, suitability, and ease of use
- Availability of content through the internet, subscription databases, or the SAILS Library Network
- Physical space limitations

Deselection of Materials

A Public Library collection is a living, changing entity. Deselection of material from the collection is a vital part of successful collection maintenance, allowing the Library to maintain a current, accurate, and appealing collection. Deselection decisions are based on patterns of use, the physical capacity of the Library, and the holdings of other libraries that may specialize in specific subject matters. The Library takes great care to retain or replace items that have enduring value to the community and the Library's collection.

As materials become worn, damaged, or lost, replacement decisions will be based on availability, ongoing demand, historical value of the item, and whether there are updated, newer, or revised versions of the material. Deselected items may be disposed of through the Friends of the Library's bookstore, a third-party vendor, or recycling.

The following criteria are used to deselect materials:

- Damage or poor condition
- Relevance to the needs and interest of the community
- Current demand and frequency of use
- Accuracy and timeliness
- Local interest
- Availability elsewhere and in other formats

Patron Requests for Purchase

The Library welcomes requests to purchase specific materials. All such requests will be subject to the same selection criteria as items purchased by the Library.

Gifts and Donations

Gifts of books and other materials in good condition and of recent publication are welcomed by the library. Donations are accepted with the understanding that donated material will be reviewed to see if it meets the same selection criteria as items purchased by the Library. Items not added to the collection may be given to the Friends of the East Bridgewater Public Library for sale or will be otherwise disposed of at the library's discretion. The Library does not assume responsibility for returning donated items that are not added to the collection, nor does the Library make valuation assessments of donated items.

Intellectual Freedom and Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

The Library respects the freedom of information of its users and adheres to the principles in the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, and Freedom to View statements. The Library seeks to provide information on all viewpoints on controversial subjects. Language, situations, or subjects that may be offensive to some community members do not disqualify material whose value is to be judged in its entirety. The Library recognizes that parents and legal guardians are the parties responsible for the reading and viewing habits of their children and legal minors. The selection of materials for the adult collection is not restricted by the possibility that children may obtain materials their parents or guardians consider inappropriate.

Library patrons interested in requesting the reconsideration of a collection item must submit a Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form. The Director of Library Services will carefully review all reconsideration requests and will respond to the patron in writing. Reconsideration requests are only accepted from residents of East Bridgewater. A resource may only be reconsidered once per year. The decision of the Director of Library Services may be appealed in writing to the East Bridgewater Board of Library Trustees. The Board will review the appeal at their next scheduled meeting and will issue a written response after considering and deliberating all aspects of the appeal. The Board's decision is final.

Review of Collection Development Policy

This policy will be reviewed by the Director of Library Services and the East Bridgewater Board of Library Trustees every two years, in order to ensure a dynamic and responsive collection that meets the needs of the community.

Endorsement by the East Bridgewater Board of Library Trustees

Approved October 2020

Revised June 2026

References

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Massachusetts Historical Commission Reconnaissance Survey Town Report, 1981, East Bridgewater. Retrieved 20260601.

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Plymouth 400 Legacy. Retrieved 20260601.

<https://www.plymouth400inc.org/our-story-exhibit-wampanoag-history/>

American Library Association Freedom to Read Statement

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement>

American Library Association Freedom to View Statement

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomviewstatement>

American Library Association Bill of Rights

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>

American Library Association Bill of Rights

Retrieved 2 June 2026

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.

VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019.

Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

American Library Association Freedom to Read Statement

Retrieved 2 June 2026

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 counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals 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 individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. 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 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 or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

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, unpopular, or considered dangerous by 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 the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression 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 others. 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; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

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. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

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 Americans 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, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.

A Joint Statement by:

[American Library Association](#)

[Association of American Publishers](#)

Subsequently endorsed by:

[American Booksellers for Free Expression](#)

[The Association of American University Presses](#)

[The Children's Book Council](#)

[Freedom to Read Foundation](#)

[National Association of College Stores](#)

[National Coalition Against Censorship](#)

[National Council of Teachers of English](#)

The Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression

The American Library Association Freedom to View Statement

Retrieved 2 June 2026

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 guarantee 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 January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council



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Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

Patron Information

Please fill out completely. Without full contact information, the Director of Library Services will not be able to contact you.

Full Name
Address
Telephone
Email

Library Resource Information

Please fill out completely. Only one resource may be listed on each reconsideration form.

Title
Author/Creator
Type of Item (circle one) Book Magazine Newspaper Audiovisual Other
If Other, please explain:

Reconsideration Information

Please answer each question completely. If needed, please add additional pages to sufficiently answer each question.

Have you read, viewed, listened to this item in its entirety? (circle one) YES NO
What are your concerns about this material?
Please share what about this material you object to, please be specific (cite pages, for example).
Do you see anything good in this material?

Are you familiar with critical reviews and opinions on this resource (published reviews, for example)?
What other materials of quality or relevance on this subject would you recommend?
Do you represent a group? (circle one) YES NO
If Yes, which group do you represent?

By signing this Request for Reconsideration of Materials, I affirm that I have read and understand the East Bridgewater Public Library's Collection Development Policy.

Signature Date

Thank you for taking time to request the reconsideration of this resource. We appreciate your interest in the Library and will respond to your request in accordance with the East Bridgewater Public Library's Collection Development Policy.