



## **Collection Maintenance and Weeding Policy**

Weeding the library's collection is an essential part of a library's collection development and maintenance; it helps to ensure a current and useful collection.

### **The Importance of Weeding**

- To maintain a current, accurate and useful collection;
- To make the best use of space;
- To improve the appearance, appeal and browsability of the collection;
- To check for materials that need repair or replacement;

### **State Library Weeding Requirements**

According to the State Library, the following guidelines must be met to qualify for Enrich Iowa funding:

- Three percent or more of the collection is withdrawn each year.
- Every item in the library's collection is evaluated for retention, replacement, or withdrawal at least every three years to determine its usefulness according to the library's collection development policy.
- Three percent or more of the collection is added each year.

### **Using the CREW Method**

Our library will use the **CREW** (Continuous **R**eview, **E**valuation and **W**eeding) method for assisting the library director and staff in maintaining a collection of material that is well balanced and fits with the mission of the Logan Public Library. CREW is a system that is used by many libraries across the state to help them determine what to keep in their collections and when to remove items to make room for new material. The following sections of this policy come from the CREW manual.

### **Benefits of Weeding**

The library has limited space and needs to be able to provide a balanced collection of material. A good practice is to keep our shelves 75-85% full in order to allow for the addition of new materials and help our patrons better find the items they are looking for. We also want our collection to be appealing to the eye. Books that are ragged, smudged or have unattractive rebinds are not pleasing to the eye and can deter the community from using the library. We also want our collection to contain material that is up to date in order to maintain its reputation for reliability. We want our collection to meet the needs of our specific community. So we should be regularly evaluating the needs of our patrons and making collection decisions that mirror their needs.

### **General Weeding Guidelines**

- The goal is to weed approximately about the same amount of materials that are added to the collection each year.
- Weed items that have poor content, poor appearance and unused materials.

- The library staff who are involved in the development of the collection are the staff who should decide what materials are weeded. Other library staff may assist in various parts of the process.

## **Staff Review**

After items have been pulled from the shelves based on the general guidelines for weeding using this policy, there must be a Staff Review process. This part of weeding is very important to ensure that each potential weeded item undergoes a rigorous review before being completely removed from the library's system.

- Items that have not circulated in 3 years can be reviewed for a disposition decision. The review needs to be conducted by the library director and one other staff person who has regular responsibility over the maintenance of the material.
- The review will look at such things as: does the item get used in house, is the item a candidate for inclusion in displays that could bring it back into circulation, would it benefit from being cataloged to a more appropriate location or is the item of importance to the community/region.
- The review will also keep in mind the Three Part Formula as described in the CREW system.
- Staff members will provide their thoughts on the importance of the material to the collection and the library director will make the final decision based on the staff review.

## **Disposing of Weeded Library Materials**

Items that were purchased for the library with tax payer dollars cannot be donated. They can either be resold for "fair market value" or recycled/destroyed. Items that were donated or purchased with donated monies can either be donated to another not-for-profit, sold or recycled/destroyed.

## **Weeding Evaluation Criteria**

- Children's Collection
  - Juvenile Fiction
    - Popular interest is the primary criteria.
    - Weed duplicate copies of past best sellers if circulation is down beginning with the most worn.
    - Consider discarding older fiction especially when it has not circulated in the past 2-3 years.
    - Replace worn editions of classics and award winners only if they are still in demand and can be replaced with attractive new editions.
  - Young Adult Fiction
    - Paperbacks are preferred.
    - Anything older than 5 years should be kept only if circulating well; classics should be replaced with new hardback or paperback editions.
  - Picture Books
    - Content should be evaluated on the merit of the stories and illustrations.
    - Outdated or trendy characters should be withdrawn as soon as popularity drops off.
    - Replace worn copies of classics and perennial favorites.
  - Nonfiction
    - Use the same general criteria for each area that is provided in the CREW Guidelines by Dewey Class, being especially attentive to weeding material that has not been used in several years or has been superseded by new editions.
  - Other Considerations
    - Series Books - Replace low-quality series with newer editions of series favorites.

- Older Titles - Replace older titles with newer ones that are more up to date unless still being read. If the books are worn, replace with newer additions if available.
  - Older Editions - Replace worn books with newer editions.
  - Geography - Titles more than five years old are misleading and inaccurate and should be pulled.
  - Science, Medicine, Interventions - Review and update every 5 years. Items more than 10 years old should almost always be discarded.
  - Textbooks - Discard unless there is a high demand in our area.
- Reference Collection
  - Encyclopedias
    - Generally retain one print encyclopedia, replacing it every 5 years.
  - Almanacs
    - Update annually, with older editions transferred to the circulating collection and then discarded the next year.
    - Regional almanacs may be retained for historic research, depending on the needs of the community.
  - Dictionaries
    - Unabridged and general desk dictionaries should be updated regularly.
    - Biographical dictionaries that focus on a specific period of time can be retained indefinitely.
    - Foreign language dictionaries should be retained until a new edition is available.
  - Directories
    - Discard when newer versions arrive.
    - City directories and local telephone books, which are useful for genealogical research, keep indefinitely as space permits.
  - Atlases
    - Are usually revised every 5 years and should be updated when revised.
  - Handbooks
    - Should be updated when new editions are released.
    - Resources that deal with health issues must be replaced as soon as a new edition is available.
  - Legal Forms and Information
    - Review annually for new editions and keep only current copies.
- Non Print Materials
  - DVD's
    - Remove when items are no longer circulating (ideal to eliminate if items have not circulated in the three years). Replace/remove damaged items.
  - Audiobooks
    - Weed audiobooks that have not circulated in the past 2 years should be considered for discarding.
- Adult Fiction
  - Circulation is the primary factor for weeding fiction. Replace or remove damaged items.
- Graphic Novels and Comic Books
  - Circulation is an important factor but the exception would be classics or milestone titles. Replace or remove damaged items.

- Periodicals
  - Many magazines are available on line in full text. Keep one calendar year.
  - Local, regional and state periodicals consider for indefinite collection.
  
- Local History
  - Retain ALL books on the history and geography of the city and county unless worn and not repairable.
  - Keep local city directories.
  - Keep MOST books by local authors and genealogies of local important families.
  
- Dewey Areas of Collection (Adult Nonfiction & Assorted Literature)
  - Start by looking at items that have not circulated in the last 3 years. A report should include the author, title, barcode number, date of publication, last date of circulation and the number of copies.
    - A three part formula is used as a rule of thumb based on opinions in the professional literature and practical experience. The first figure refers to the years since the book's latest copyright date (age of material in the book). The second figure refers to the maximum permissible time without usage (in terms of years since its last recorded circulation and assuming that the time has been in the library's collection for at least that period of time). Exceptions to this factor are related mainly to items with local history value. The third refers to the presence of various negative factors, called MUSTIE factors, which will influence weeding decision.
      - **M=Misleading** and/or factually misleading
      - **U=Ugly** worn and beyond mending or rebinding
      - **S=Superseded** by a truly new edition or by a much better book on the subject
      - **T=Trivial** of no discernible literacy or scientific merit
      - **I=Irrelevant** to the needs and interest of the community
      - **E**=the material or information may be obtained expeditiously **Elsewhere** through interlibrary loan, reciprocal borrowing or in electronic format.
      - If any one of the three parts of the formula is not applicable to a specific subject, the category is filled with an **X**
    - **See the Overview Chart of CREW Formulas for the formula that corresponds to each area in the Dewey System.**

### **Further Weeding Resources**

For more information on specific areas of the collection, see *CREW: A Weeding Manual for Modern Libraries*, Texas State Library and Archives Commission, Austin, TX. 2012.

*Material for this policy was borrowed from CREW: A Weeding Manual for Modern Libraries, Texas State Library and Archives Commission, Austin, TX. 2012 and the State Library of Iowa webpage.*

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