



## Reading District Center

# District Services, Programming, and Resource Development Policy

Adopted 07/01/2024

Reading District Center (the District) is located in Reading, Pennsylvania the urban center of the more suburban and rural County of Berks. The District offers resources, services, and programs to all twenty-one (21) state-aided public libraries in the Reading Library District, hereafter referred to as “district libraries”. It is the District’s intention to provide these supportive provisions to district libraries so that they in turn may meet the informational, educational, and recreational needs of a diverse community of approximately 428,849 residents.

### Program Policy

The District provides programs and programming support to all district libraries. The District upholds the principles of intellectual freedom and supports the rights of individuals to read, speak, view, access information, and exchange points of view, even though the content may be controversial, unorthodox, or unacceptable to others. The District supports free and open access to information and ideas as stated in the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to View Statement of the American Library Association. Approval of a program does not constitute an endorsement of the program content or the views expressed by presenters or participants.

The responsibility for programming at the District rests with the District Consultants, who administer programming under the authority of the District Administrator. District Consultants have the authority and responsibility to select, design, schedule, organize, change, or cancel programming as determined to meet the needs of district services and the district Strategic Plan.

- District programs are free and open to the public, including non-residents and non-cardholders.
- The District presents programs for various age groups, cultures, backgrounds, and interest groups. Programs may target a general audience or be tailored/limited to a specific audience.
- The District reserves the right not to schedule a program and/or to cancel a program that does not meet programming objectives, due to weather, low registration, absence of the presenter, or for any other reason. Cancelled programs may or may not be rescheduled.
- The District may co-sponsor programs with entities whose mission and goals are compatible.
- Marketing for District programs must be approved by District staff before distribution.
- The District will use the same criteria in all program selection whether the idea comes from staff or the public.
- Presenters may not use programs for business solicitation, commercial, religious, or partisan purposes; however, presenters may be able to sell their own books/CDs/artwork if District staff have given preapproval. Presenters are responsible for handling related monetary transactions.
- Staff members from the District or district libraries who present programs do so as part of their regular job and not as outside contractors.
- The District will make every attempt to accommodate all who wish to attend a program. However, the District may require signed waivers, limit attendance, or utilize pre-registration.
- Patrons attending programs, whether virtual or in person, are expected to adhere to all District policies, and failure to do so may result in the patron’s immediate removal from the program.

### Resource and Collection Development Policy

Collection Development includes the planning, selection, acquiring, cataloging, and weeding of library materials. Library materials include, but are not limited to the following: books, periodicals, pamphlets, government publications, reference works, newspapers, microfiche, microfilm, audiobooks, CD's, movies, large print materials, eBooks, eMagazines, museum passes, realia, streaming videos, maps, educational and on-line databases.

The District will primarily focus on selecting electronic materials and resources that may be made available to patrons at all district libraries. Physical materials funded by the District are governed by the Reading Public Library Collection Development Policy; however, all electronic materials and resources funded by the District are governed by this District policy. The District will not accept any book donations, but will instead direct all such donations to the individual district libraries. The responsibility for the selection of electronic materials and resources funded by the District rests with the District Consultants, who operate under the supervision of the District Administrator. At times, electronic resources might take the form of a shared collection, where staff at district libraries may also be responsible for selecting electronic materials and resources funded by their own library budgets. The District Consultants, under the supervision of the District Administrator, will be in charge of the overall management, development, curation, weeding, and promotion for such shared collections.

The District's goal in resource and collection development is to supplement and support the resources and collections already provided by the district libraries. The District aims to provide the best possible collection with the financial resources available. The decision to select any item or resource is based on demand, anticipated need, and the effort to maintain a wide and balanced collection.

The District strives to maintain materials representing multiple sides of an issue in a neutral, unbiased manner when possible. Selection of materials by the District does not mean endorsement of any particular material. The existence of any viewpoint in the collection is an expression of the District's policy of intellectual freedom, not an endorsement of that particular point of view. The District provides service to all within the framework of its rules and regulations and does not knowingly discriminate in its material selection.

The District endorses the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read Statement, and the Freedom to View Statement.

The selection of material is based on the District's goals, and informational, educational, cultural, and recreational value. The District strives to build a collection that reflects the racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the community. The following general criteria will be used in selecting materials for addition to the collection:

- 1) Importance and value to the collection and library users
- 2) Significance of the subject matter
- 3) Current appeal and popular demand, and anticipated needs/interests of the public
- 4) Cost and budgetary constraints
- 5) Authority, accuracy, and artistic quality
- 6) Illustrations, photographs, and other visuals
- 7) Size of text
- 8) Vocabulary development
- 9) Sound and visual quality
- 10) Contribution of a work to the diversity or breadth of the collection
- 11) Representation of unique or controversial points of view

## 12) Requests by the public

Selectors evaluate each title based on its own merits, considering its relation to the collection as a whole. Selectors prioritize new titles and titles with high holds, ensuring the collection includes materials for recreational reading, titles that have lasting value (classics), and sources of information covering a wide range of knowledge. Library materials are divided into three core collections based on specific age ranges: Children's Collection - birth through twelve (0-12) year age range, Teen Collection - twelve to seventeen (12-17) year age range, Adult Collection - eighteen plus (18+) year age range. Titles held in one collection may also be included in another collection if they are of an exceptional nature and wide range of appeal.

The withdrawal of materials from the collection (also called weeding) is an ongoing process directly related to collection development. Electronic materials and resources that are outdated, duplicated, no longer accurate, expired, or no longer used may be removed from the collection. The District Consultants, under the general direction of the District Administrator, will be responsible for weeding the District-funded electronic collection.

### **Requests for Reconsideration**

The District considers all resources, materials, programs, and services selected under this policy to be protected under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. If a patron claims that a particular item is not constitutionally protected, the burden of proof rests with the patron.

Patrons who object to the presence or absence of any District program, resource, or any material item held within a District shared collection may request a review by completing the Request for Reconsideration form. The patron will be able to obtain a "Request for Reconsideration" form from the District's website. District libraries may print out copies of the District's Request for Reconsideration form for requesting patrons. Patrons must clearly state the reasons for exclusion or removal on this form. Patrons may only submit one Request for Reconsideration per calendar year, and may only request the reconsideration of one material, resource, or program per submission. Additionally, once the committee has made a decision regarding contested material, resource, or program, they will not accept any other Requests for Reconsideration for that item within one year from the date of the decision. The completed Request for Reconsideration form will be reviewed by a committee comprised of the District Administrator, the two (2) District Consultants, and staff from two to four (2-4) of the district libraries. The BCPL System Administrator may be included in the review committee. After reviewing the Request for Reconsideration and the material in question, the committee will vote to determine the actions, if any that are to be taken. This decision is final. A written response with reasons for the decision will be given to the patron. Programs, resources, and materials subject to question will not be canceled or removed from the collection or otherwise censored during the Request for Reconsideration process.

### **InterLibrary Loan (ILL) Policy**

As defined by the Interlibrary Loan Code for the United States, "InterLibrary Loan (ILL) is the process by which a library requests material from, or supplies material to, another library. The purpose of interlibrary loan as defined by this code is to obtain, upon request of a library user, material not available in the user's local library." For the purposes of this policy, ILL refers to this supplying and requesting process between libraries within the District to and from libraries outside of the District.

District libraries may utilize District ILL services to ship materials to and from libraries outside of the district service area. To participate in District ILL services, district libraries must agree to follow the ILL policies and procedures, and to allow the District to view statistics and shipping statuses in AccessPA. Limitations to ILL services may be imposed in the future.

District libraries must include the appropriate Access Pennsylvania (AccessPA) identifying paperwork with all ILL shipments, including the AccessPA Lender Request Form as well as the AccessPA Bookstrap.

ILL items loaned to libraries outside of the district service area will take approximately one to two (1-2) weeks to ship after the District receives the item. ILL items borrowed from libraries outside of the district service area will take approximately one (1) week to deliver to district libraries after the District receives the item. Inquiries regarding the status of an item should not be made any sooner than one (1) week after an AccessPA or district library has shipped the item to the District. Please factor these shipping times into loan periods.

Any costs or fees associated with sharing or borrowing ILL items, such as but not limited to loss, damage, or lending charges, are the responsibility of the district libraries. By participating in District ILL services, district libraries agree to pay all fees and charges relating to ILL items within 30 business days.

The district libraries must also comply with all tenets of the [Pennsylvania Interlibrary Loan Guidelines 2019](https://www.statelibrary.pa.gov/Pages/default.aspx), found at <https://www.statelibrary.pa.gov/Pages/default.aspx>.

#### **Expected ILL Standards**

- District libraries will make ILL available to all registered library users in good standing, who live, work, or go to school in the Reading District.
- District libraries will manage ILL services through AccessPA. The District will only handle the shipping of ILL materials to and from libraries within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
- District libraries may also directly request or lend items from or to libraries outside of Access Pennsylvania; however, shipping for such ILL requests will be handled by the requesting/lending district libraries. Direct ILL requests are usually processed by searching WorldCat and completing an ALA direct request form that is sent directly to the owning library. District staff may be able to provide clarification and guidance on this process if requested.
- District libraries will designate one staff member to serve as that library's primary ILL contact person. That staff member will attend the District ILL training, and will handle all communication to and from District staff regarding ILL questions or concerns.
- District libraries will have their own District-created ILL Borrower Evergreen account to check out items to other libraries. District libraries should not create or use ILL accounts for each borrowing library.
- District libraries who borrow materials should equally share their materials with all libraries within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania via AccessPA.
- District libraries will not submit ILL requests for items held in the shared BCPL System catalog or in other district libraries collections, including digital collections, unless there is an exceptional situation that is pre-approved by the District.
- District libraries will limit patron ILL requests/loans to no more than five (5) items at one time.
- District libraries will not request multiple copies of a single title, unless there is an exceptional situation that is pre-approved by the District.

- District libraries will not request the same item more than one (1) time within a year's time, unless there is an exceptional situation that is pre-approved by the District. If a patron or several patrons make repeated requests for an item, district libraries should consider purchasing the item for their collection.
- If an item is widely available for purchase in a "new" condition for less than \$15.00, district libraries will contemplate purchasing the item for their collection instead of requesting it via ILL.
- When applicable, district libraries should make certain that the patron is aware of any costs or fees associated with an ILL, as well as the approximate length of time an ILL request will take.