KATHERINE DELMAR BURKE SCHOOL
LIBRARY COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

SCHOOL MISSION
Burke’s mission is to educate, encourage, and empower girls. The school helps girls thrive as learners, develop a strong sense of self, contribute to community, and fulfill their potential, now and in the future. Through its curriculum, services, and collection, the Library supports the school’s mission.

LIBRARY GOALS
The Library strives to provide depth, breadth, and variety in research materials and literature. The library collection is therefore developed to accomplish the following goals:

• Support and extend the current curriculum for varied abilities, developmental levels, and learning styles in grades K-8
• Support and extend emerging curriculum for varied abilities, developmental levels, and learning styles in grades K-8
• Empower students to evaluate, process, and use information and ideas wisely and well
• Meet needs and satisfy interests of students for personal research and recreational reading
• Represent multiple perspectives and experience
• Provide a resource for faculty and staff for curriculum and professional development
• Provide a community resource for students and families
• Prepare students for full participation in a diverse and democratic society, now and into the future
• Nurture lifelong learning through formal instruction and for its own sake.

The Library collection provides high quality materials in a variety of formats. Although generally broad and deep, the collection has particular areas of strength that include the following:

• Experiences of girls and women (e.g., achievements and challenges)
• Diverse experience (e.g., cultural, ethnic, religious, gender, and sexual orientation)
• Innovation through science, technology, and math
• Healthy relationships from personal friendships to global connections.

RESPONSIBILITY
The librarians are primarily responsible for the evaluation, selection, and acquisition of paper and electronic materials for the Burke’s Library. The librarians stay informed about new materials and trends through review media and professional associations. Further, they formally solicit suggestions from faculty in late spring of each year and on an ongoing basis, and they accept suggestions from families and students as well. The administration sets
overall budget, oversees general direction, consults on various issues, and provides support should questions and/or challenges arise.

RANGE OF MATERIALS

Print Materials
The Library’s extensive book collection includes fiction and nonfiction in both hardback and paperback editions for students with varied interests, abilities, developmental levels, and learning styles in grades K-8. The Library also holds periodicals that include professional journals for faculty and staff as well as instructional and recreational offerings for students and the general community.

Non-Print Materials
The Library extends the print collection with A/V and electronic materials to include the following:

- Audio books (e.g., CD’s as alternative format for print works in the collection, especially for curriculum materials)
- Videos (DVD’s as alternative format for print works in the collection as well as instructional material, not available in other formats)
- Electronic subscription services of general interest including encyclopedias and subject specific reference sources
- eBooks including fiction and nonfiction titles

SELECTION
The librarians adhere to high standards in material selection and use a variety of sources to identify print and non-print materials to meet curricular, recreational, professional, and community needs.

Criteria for Print and Non-Print Materials

General Criteria
The librarians seek out materials with consideration of following general criteria:

- High literary and artistic quality
- High quality with regard to content (e.g., accuracy, authenticity, currency, and authority)
- Well-designed for purpose and accessibility
- Suitable format for purpose and accessibility
- Durable
- Motivational for learners
- Cost effective (i.e., potential value commensurate with cost)
- Reflective of diverse experiences
- Representative and respectful of multiple perspectives and ideas

Specific Criteria for Non-Print Materials

- High technical quality
• High degree of user control
• Appropriate to serve needs, interests, abilities and developmental levels of K-8 school
• Accurate and up-to-date information
• Reliably and regularly maintained
• Strong searching capabilities and navigation tools
• User-friendly with attractive and easy-to-use layout
• Clear information about authorship
• Easily accessible to community on and off-campus as possible.

**Instructional Use Considerations**
With regard to instructional value, the librarians look for materials that meet specific goals of the Burkes’ program:

• Supportive of school’s mission
• Supportive of school’s commitment to 21st century learning
• Supportive of curriculum in all departments and school offerings
• Suitable format for teaching and learning
• Effective design for teaching and learning
• Appropriate information for particular interests, abilities, developmental levels and learning styles in K-8 school.

**Personal Use Considerations**
With regard to materials for personal use, the librarians consider the following:

• Popularity
• Age and developmental appropriateness
• Variety
• Entertainment value

**SOURCES**
**Information About Possible Acquisitions**
When possible, the librarians examine and evaluate materials before making selection decisions. The librarians also rely on a myriad of reliable sources to identify materials for possible purchase. Sources include the following:

• Professional review media (e.g., SLJ, Booklist, and Hornbook)
• Suggestions from faculty, students, and families
• Professional organizations
• Annual “best book” lists (e.g., ALSC notable lists, PW, and SLJ)
• Award lists (e.g., Newbery, Caldecott, Sibert, Geisel, Batchelder, Coretta Scott King, Pura Belpre, Schneider, National Book Award, and Jane Addams)
• Annual lists of special interest books (e.g., Amelia Bloomer, LGBT, NCSS, NCTE, and NSTA)
• Colleagues
• Follett’s Titlewave service including collection analysis and title suggestions
• Publishers’ catalogs

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Sources for Acquisition
The Library acquires materials in various ways that include the following:

- Purchasing from a jobber (e.g., Follett’s Titlewave and Junior Library Guild)
- Purchasing from local independent bookstores
- Purchasing via online vendors, for example, Amazon, especially for out-of-print materials
- Gifts from the community (evaluated by the same criteria as purchased materials; the librarians accept gifts with a proviso: if not needed, the gift materials will be donated to either the Children’s Book Project or the Friends of the San Francisco Public Library)

MAINTENANCE
Collection development is an ongoing process of assessing strengths and weaknesses. Thus, collection development revolves around both the acquisition of new materials and withdrawal of those deemed no longer suitable for any reason. As needed and possible, lost materials and materials removed for bad condition are replaced.

Withdrawal/Weeding Criteria
Materials are withdrawn or “weeded” from the collection for various reasons:

- Poor condition
- Poor quality
- Not in demand (i.e., no circulation in 5 years)
- Mediocre
- Biased, including stereotypes
- Outside targeted reading levels
- Difficult to use (e.g., no index or table of contents)
- Superseded by better material

Weeding Schedule
Weeding is an ongoing process. Materials are continuously examined as they circulate. The librarians also target sections of the collection for more careful analysis. For example, for one academic year, focus might be on the 500’s (Science) or 600’s (Applied Science). Some sections receive frequent attention and others, less. The librarians strive to review the entire collection in a systematic way with a five-year plan.

PRINCIPLES
The Library supports the Library Bill of Rights, Students' Right to Read (NCTE), and other position statements on intellectual freedom from the American Library Association and the American Association of School Librarians*. That said, special effort is made to adhere to a time-honored principle: the right book for the right child at the right time. To that end, the
librarians provide reader’s advisory to students one-on-one and in class groups. In addition, the librarians organize the collection to help students find suitable materials independently.

With the exception of nonfiction, books for Lower School students are in the Lower School Library. Lower School fiction is divided into three sections by approximate reading level. Upper School fiction is shelved together but marked for young adult content as appropriate. Books marked YA are reserved for seventh and eighth graders and for fifth and sixth graders with written parental consent.

The librarians strive to help students choose books wisely and well by taking into account their varied interests, abilities, developmental levels, and learning styles. With continual practice and guided experiences throughout the collection, students develop the ability to find “just right” books and a sense of their personal preferences.

QUESTIONS
Occasionally the Library receives questions from parents about specific materials. Most often the question has to do with “fit:” whether the material in question is appropriate for a particular student. The librarians take all questions seriously. As questions arise, the librarians do the following:

- Strive to understand the genesis and nature of the question
- Explain the general material selection policy and use of the material in the context of curriculum or recreational reading
- Consider the question in light of selection criteria and program
- Apprise the administration of difficult questions
- Respond to the parent with findings and with a recommendation on whether to retain or remove the material in question.

Should parents be dissatisfied with the response, further conversation can take place involving librarians, teachers, and/or administrators. Should it be useful, the librarians may ask that a formal questionnaire be filled out to help focus discussion. The CCBC site offers practical guidance, and the ALA provides a suggested questionnaire. Teachers also sometimes question materials. For example, they may find previously undetected bias. The librarians take all questions seriously and consider the question at hand in light of the general material selection policy, program, and impact on students. A decision is then made whether to retain or remove the material.

BEYOND COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT
A strong library collection is the foundation for a strong curriculum, but having accessible materials is not enough. Dianne McFee Hopkins, a professor of Library and Information Studies at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, writes, “Students’ right to access to information includes the right to develop skills necessary to locate and obtain materials and to examine critically and interpret the information that they find.” Thus, the Burke’s librarians are charged not only with developing a strong collection but also with implementing a strong program that

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helps students achieve information literacy and a full appreciation of literature. The librarians therefore rely on the AASL Standards Framework for Learners to help students learn to process, use, and share information ideas and appreciate the pleasures of literary experience. The goal is always to empower students, now and as lifelong learners.

FOOTNOTES
*http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill
**http://www.ala.org/tools/challengedmaterials/support/samplereconsideration

SOURCES


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