Collection Development Policy

Aligning with our mission and our equity pedagogy, the library strives to be a warm, welcoming, and inclusive environment that students view as a place to connect, converse, and grow. The mission of the Lick-Wilmerding High School Library (Jack McCullough ’25) is to support and enrich the school curriculum; to engage the students in the process of lifelong learning; to support and encourage lifetime reading habits; and to empower the students as library users. In order to support and enrich the school curriculum, the LWHS Library is continually growing and changing to meet the needs of the students and faculty. S.R. Ranganathan, in his Five Laws of Library Science, writes that the library is a “growing organism.”1 Certainly, in this fast-paced twenty-first century, the library must be flexible and responsive to the ever-changing needs of the community.

To engage the students in the process of lifelong learning, the library embraces the concept of student participation in the collection development of the library. This empowers the students to request materials for areas of interest that would not come under the umbrella of current school curriculum. This allows our library to truly reflect the community that it serves.

To support and encourage lifetime reading habits, the library collects both academic and recreational reading materials. Professor Stephen Krashen—an expert on reading and its effects on language acquisition and academic success—explains, “Self-selected voluntary reading is so pleasant that readers often report being addicted to it.”2 Self-selection builds the lifetime habit of returning to the library on a regular basis so that when it is time for academic research, it is more likely that students will use the school library and all of its resources.

It is important to “provide opportunities for students to participate in in-school recreational reading,”3 for student to develop strong reading skills. When students enter the ninth grade, those who have struggled with reading in the past may have developed what Sean Covey calls the “sense of disbelief in one’s self.”4 Providing the opportunity for pleasure reading in the library helps to build the confidence these students need to become critical readers at LWHS and throughout their lifetime. In a survey conducted by Worthy, Moorman, & Turner, the most preferred materials for self-selected reading were “fantasy, magazines, sports, and drawing books.”5 As a whole, boys read more magazines than girls.6 In order to encourage recreational reading, interesting materials that matter to boys “must be available at school during free reading time.”7

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6 Wilson, 46.
7 Wilson, 46.
Intellectual Freedom
The library collection attempts to provide for the free exchange of ideas in accordance with
the Library Bill of Rights as adopted by the American Library Association. No censorship will
be exercised on the basis of frankness of language or the controversial manner an author
may use in dealing with religious, political, sexual, social, economic, scientific, or moral
issues as long as the materials fit into the general collection parameters of the library.

Questioned Materials Procedures
The Librarian will ask the persons or groups who question or challenge materials to fill out a Request
for Reconsideration (writeable) form which must be signed by the persons or groups. This completed
form will then be referred to the Head of School and the Librarian for appropriate action. In
handling criticisms of material or attempts at censorship, the Head of School and Librarian will
provide the persons or groups a copy of this policy and a written response. That decision is final.

Selection Responsibility
The Librarian supervises the collection development process. Although the Librarian is
responsible for the overall development of the library collections, faculty in all disciplines of
the school are expected to take an active role in selecting library print and media materials.

Students, staff, and administrators are also encouraged to make recommendations for
book and media purchases to the Librarian. Requests for purchase of library materials,
from all sources, will be considered in light of this collection development policy and in
relation to the overall instructional and educational purposes of the school. An order will
be placed for the materials if funds are available, or the request will be placed in a future-
orders file for such time when funds will allow it to be reconsidered for purchase.

Allocation of Funds and Collection Development
The Librarian is responsible for determining how funds will be allocated within the materials
budget. Funds are allocated for reference and general materials, acquisitions, cataloging and
processing, as well as an equitable distribution of funds for subject materials representing
the needs of all departments. The allocation of funds and the comprehensiveness of
the collection will reflect student demand for materials and the discipline areas.

Selection and Evaluation of Materials
Materials for the library will be selected in the following order of priority: curriculum support and
enrichment, outstanding items in other fields of knowledge; materials for professional growth of
faculty and staff, and materials that promote social and pleasure reading—promoting life-long reading
habits. The Librarian makes a conscious effort to collect materials that reflect multiple points of
view through a multicultural lens that includes age, race, gender, and religion. Consideration of
materials stresses authority, accuracy, literary merit, curriculum relevance, and student interest.
Selection of Materials
Selection of materials is based on the following criteria, which include but are not limited to:

- Content and value of the work as a whole
- Educational significance
- Integral to the instructional program
- Interests and needs of students and faculty served by the library
- Contribution to literary appreciation
- Favorable reviews and recommendations
- Reputation and significance of the author, producer, or publisher
- Currency and appropriateness of material
- Representative viewpoints on controversial issues
- High potential user appeal
- High artistic quality and/or literary style
- Accuracy and clarity of information
- Fair and unbiased presentation of information
- Value proportionate to cost and/or need
- Timeliness or permanence
- Selection by state and national book awards

Weeding
Materials in the collection are regularly reviewed for currency and physical condition. Criteria for weeding include but are not limited to the following:

- Currency
- Biased information
- Accuracy of information
- Importance of instructional program
- Content and value of the work as a whole
- Educational significance
- Lack of timeliness or permanence
- Usage statistics

Controversial Materials
It is important to maintain intellectual freedom as expressed in the Library Bill of Rights. The major areas of controversial materials are race, sex, politics, religion, literature, and economics. In selecting materials from any of these areas, the following criteria are given consideration:

- The materials on controversial issues should be representative of a particular point of view
and a sincere effort made to select equally representative materials covering contrasting points of view.

• The material does not unfairly, inaccurately, or viciously disparage a particular race or religion. A writer’s expression of a certain viewpoint is not to be considered as a disparagement when it represents the historical or contemporary views held by some persons or groups.

• The materials on religion are chosen to explain rather than convince and are selected to represent the field as widely as necessary for the school’s purposes.

• The selection of materials on political theories and ideologies or on public issues is directed toward maintaining a balanced collection representing various views.

• In a literary work of established quality, the use of profanity or the treatment of sex is not an adequate reason for eliminating the material from the school library. (A work of established quality may have any of the following characteristics: award winner, good reviews, and educational value.)

• Material on physiology, physical maturation, or personal hygiene should be accurate, in good taste, and age appropriate.

• Materials should be selected for their strengths rather than rejected for their weaknesses.

• Materials should be selected that meet the students’ needs beyond the curriculum and encourage intellectual growth, critical thinking, problem solving, and information literacy.

• Because literacy is a major goal of the library, the Librarian should select materials that encourage free voluntary reading.

Electronic Materials
The library will provide access to electronic journals, books, and other materials that it acquires and/or licenses via the central library webpage. The purchase of electronic journals and ebooks should follow present collecting policies: 1) consider present curriculum and research needs; 2) select materials which meet the standards the school expects of all materials in regard to excellence, comprehensiveness, and authoritativeness; and 3) weigh the purchase of a particular title against other possible acquisitions from material budgets. The Librarian will negotiate and comply with vendor licensing agreements.

Policy Review and Revision
The Librarian and the Head of School review the Collection Development Policy on a regular basis to ensure that it is up-to-date and that it reflects the current educational pedagogy, library standards, and the school community.

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