

# Alabama Virtual Library

## Collections and Materials Management Policy

### Mission Statement

The Alabama Virtual Library provides ad-free, safe, and reliable information from databases for all Alabama residents 24/7 free of charge. It is primarily a group of online databases that have magazine, journal, and newspaper articles for research. Through the AVL, an equitable core of information sources is available to every student and citizen in Alabama, raising the level of excellence in schools and communities across the state. Extensive efforts are made to organize materials in age-appropriate sections. AVL is a legislated entity that is funded by the State's Education Trust Fund.

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### Introduction

#### Purpose of the Policy Statement and Audience to Whom it is Directed

The Collection Management and Development Policy describes the Alabama Virtual Library's collection management and acquisitions endeavors and their relationship to the needs of the citizens of Alabama. The policy is directed primarily to Alabama Virtual Library (AVL) Council, and secondarily to the AVL's Database Review Committee.

#### General Description of the Institution and Clientele Served

The AVL provides all students, teachers, and citizens of the State of Alabama with online access to essential library and information resources. It is primarily a group of online databases that have magazine, journal, and newspaper articles for research. Through the AVL, an equitable core of information sources is available to every student and citizen in Alabama, raising the level of excellence in schools and communities across the state.

#### Mission Statement and Goals of the Collection Management and Development Program

The Collection Management and Development Policy is intended to assist in the selection of resources. It supports the Council in the decision-making process regarding routine acquisitions of electronic resources and in establishing priorities to guide organization, deselection/replacement, and preservation decisions. In addition, the policy defines the scope of the existing collections and outlines recommendations for future development of

collections. The policy is intended to build better communication between the Council and the Database Review Committee members, enabling them to evaluate progress in meeting collection goals. It should provide basic information to prepare and allocate funds.

## Policies Related to Equipment Purchase and Technical Support for Electronic Resources

Equipment for access to electronic resources is upgraded as needed. The Alabama Supercomputer Authority supports and provides access.

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## Reconsideration of Materials

The Alabama Virtual Library believes materials should be judged on their own merits, not on partisan or doctrinal grounds. Additionally, the origin, background, or viewpoints of contributors should not be grounds for excluding materials.

Requests for review of materials should be submitted using the Reconsideration of Materials online form and will be reviewed by the Alabama Virtual Library Council.

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## Collections Policy

### Mission Statement and Goals of the Collection Management and Development Program

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## General Collection Management and Development Policy

The primary selectors and de-selectors are the members of the Database Review Committee. The Database Review committee shall be appointed by the Chairperson and shall be composed of at least five members or more broadly representative of the

participating agencies. The committee may include Council members or members recommended by Council from their constituents. The Database Review committee shall review, compare, and make recommendations to Council about new products, subscriptions, and services to add to the AVL. The committee may also make a recommendation to the Council on content and relevance of resources as it suits the needs of users.

The final decision regarding any request rests with the Council. The primary criteria for selecting any resource are the extent to which it is relevant to the research needs of all students, teachers, and citizens of the State of Alabama. Deselection involves the decision to cancel resources, and replacement involves the decision to substitute one resource for another. Primary responsibility for deselection/replacement decisions lies with the Database Review Committee.

## Selection Criteria to Consider Are:

### *Scope*

Does the resource support the mission and goals of the AVL? Does the resource meet the needs of the citizens of Alabama? Does the resource fulfill the core of information sources? Will the resource raise the level of excellence in schools and communities across the state?

### *Content*

Does the resource go into enough detail, or is it superficial? Is the resource presented at a level (vocabulary, visual, etc.) that can be comprehended by the intended user? In what section(s) would the resource be age appropriate?

How suitable is the length? Does the resource offer an intellectual challenge? Are all sides of a question presented fairly, or is there evidence of a bias?

### *Authority*

What is the background and reputation of the author or creator? Of the publisher? Of the sponsoring body? Of the vendor?

### *Currency*

How up to date is the information? In revised editions, how much revision has been done?

### *Reliability*

How accurate is the information presented? How reliable is the URL? How reliable are the vendors' servers?

### *Comparison with Similar Resources*

Does the AVL provide this information in another source? If so, does the resource offer any unique features or options that justify the duplication?

### *Special Features/Problems*

Is special equipment needed to use this work? How permanent is the content of this resource? Will it soon become obsolete because of the format or content? Is the medium well established in the marketplace, or is it one that may be changed or replaced in the near future?

### *Technical Support*

Does the vendor provide good technical support? Is there a toll-free phone line or Web address for support? What user documentation is available? What online tutorials are available? Will this acquisition/subscription require special training? Are usage statistics provided?

### *Cost*

Is there a less expensive substitute that will serve the same purpose? What are the processing costs? The storage costs? The access fees? Is the medium well established in the marketplace, or is it one that may be changed or replaced in the near future?

## Criteria for Deselection/Replacement of Materials Are:

### *Usage Statistics*

Usage statistics should be obtained for each resource. The cost per use should be calculated. The cost per use and overall usage statistics should be evaluated. Those resources receiving little use or whose cost per use is deemed high should be reviewed, evaluated, and, if necessary, canceled. Replacement should be dependent upon the resource's meeting the current selection criteria, availability, and budget.

### *Obsolescence of Information*

Resources that contain obsolete or erroneous information and do not retain some historical, seminal, or research value should be canceled. This factor is particularly applicable in rapidly changing fields such as medicine, the sciences, and technology.

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## Challenged Resources

Challenged resources will remain on the Alabama Virtual Library during the reconsideration process. Resources that are challenged and deemed age inappropriate by the Alabama

Virtual Library Council may either be removed or relocated to another age-appropriate section(s).

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## Types of Resources

### Electronic Databases

Electronic databases include online encyclopedias, almanacs, indexes to information contained in books and magazines, and full-text books, and journals. These resources will vary according to the needs of the various education communities. Each education community will select a core of age-appropriate resources to support its overall curriculum. Examples of core resources are online encyclopedias, almanacs, biographical sources, and the full text of magazines and books. The AVL will negotiate and comply with vendor licensing agreements. Licenses should:

- Comply with the limitations set by Alabama law.
- Provide the AVL with rights to the content for which it has paid.
- Should not require the AVL to police the use of or hold it liable for the use of the information.
- Should require only "reasonable effort" on the part of the AVL to address misuse by AVL users when discovered by the publisher or vendor.
- Allow use by all students and teachers in Alabama schools (K-12 school systems, two-year colleges, four-year colleges, and universities), patrons of Alabama public libraries, and all citizens of the State of Alabama.
- Should permit "fair use" of the information, understood to mean to include the same sorts of curricular and research purposes that have been pursued with print materials.
- Should allow the AVL to enhance the use of the data to make it more visible or convenient as needed, e.g. online reserves.
- Respect the confidentiality of information about individual users and their use of the information.
- Provide for reciprocal rights to terminate the license agreement.
- Provide usage data to facilitate internal needs and service analysis.

### Electronic Books (eBooks)

Electronic books (eBooks) will vary according to the needs of the various education communities. Each education community will select a core of age-appropriate resources to support its overall curriculum. Examples of core resources are online encyclopedias,

almanacs, biographical sources, and other special reference sources. E-books will be considered individually and in packages.

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## Access and Ownership Policies

The content of the Alabama Virtual Library will be delivered online over the Internet to personal computers and computers in public schools, community colleges, four-year colleges, and public libraries across the state. Each computer will need a web browser and an Internet connection. Each school system, college and university, and public library will be able to choose its own Internet service provider.

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## Inquiries

### Resource Inquiries

The Alabama Virtual Library endorses the philosophy of the "Freedom to Read Statement" and the "Library Bill of Rights." These statements indicate that "materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation" and that "materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval." If there are requests for reconsideration of any materials, [the requests should be submitted using the Reconsideration of Materials Request form](#) and will be reviewed by the Alabama Virtual Library Council.

### Vendor Inquiries

Are you a vendor that is interested in making your resource available to AVL? [For more information, please visit our Vendor Inquiries page.](#)

### Database/Resource Request

If there is a database or resource that you believe would be a valuable addition to the Alabama Virtual Library's database/resource collection, [please use this form to submit a database/resource request to the AVL Council](#). The AVL Council Database Review Committee will review your request, and a member of the Database Review Committee may contact you for additional information.

## Challenged Materials

### Policy

Resource challenges must be based on the failure of a resource to fall within the AVL's selection and collection development policies. When challenging an item, the patron may

request the AVL take one of three actions; (1) removal of an item because it is inappropriate, (2) relocation of an item to another section of the collection, or (3) the addition of a source to balance the collection by providing alternative views. The AVL may agree to take any of these actions or no action at all. Certain items cannot be modified at the individual level and the AVL's control over access may be restricted. Challenged items will remain accessible during the duration of the challenge.

## Procedures

Although every effort is made to ensure materials are organized in age-appropriate sections, some users may have objections to certain resources. Requests for review of materials should be submitted using the Reconsideration of Materials form and will be reviewed by the AVL Council. A maximum of 10 resources may be challenged by any individual within a 30-day time period. Decisions will be made by the AVL Council, and a response provided within 30 business days.