

**FOCUS AREA: LIBRARY POLICIES**

**Objectives :**

Library policies should describe and support the mission and operation of an equitable, inclusive library program.

**Characteristics :**

Effective library policies are:

- *Context-specific:* They are written for a specific community at a specific point in time and reflect a deep understanding of the community’s assets and needs.
- *Explicit:* Equity and inclusion are referred to explicitly as foundational values and as rationales for individual policies.
- *Equitable:* They account for disparities and take into consideration the lived experiences of youth and their families / communities.
- *Collaborative:* They are developed by a team of library stakeholders, including BIYOC.
- *Youth-Centered:* They prioritize the needs and interests of youth.
- *Compassionate:* They are positive rather than punitive.

Examples	Observations/Wonderings	Action Steps
<p><b>Context-Specific:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Library policy document includes a mission statement that is specific to the community served by the library</li> <li>➤ Library policy document includes current data about the population served by the library, and/or references a current community analysis document</li> </ul> <p><b>Explicit:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Library policies explicitly reference diversity, inclusion, and equity as foundational values and as rationales for relevant individual policies</li> </ul>		

Examples	Observations/Wonderings	Action Steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Materials selection policies include criteria related to diversity and equity (for example, positive reviews by reviewers of color)</li> <li>➤ Materials selection policies include non-traditional selection tools that focus on diverse titles, for example We Need Diverse Books or Rich in Color</li> </ul> <p><b>Equitable:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Library policies are developed with attention toward their potential impacts on BIYOC and their families and other marginalized communities, such as youth experiencing homelessness</li> </ul> <p><b>Collaborative:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Library policies are developed collaboratively; BIYOC are given an opportunity to provide feedback on the policies</li> </ul> <p><b>Youth-Centered:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Library policies recognize and respect the needs of all children and teens to socialize and “hang out”</li> <li>➤ Library use policies allow for movement of furniture, support collaborative work, and permit conversation.</li> </ul> <p><b>Compassionate:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Library policies are positive, not punitive (they do not focus on potential “bad behavior” by library users)</li> <li>➤ The library does not charge fines for late materials</li> </ul>		