LIVERMORE PUBLIC LIBRARY

POLICY STATEMENT

INFORMATION SERVICES

The Livermore Public Library recognizes its responsibility to provide access for citizens to accurate information representing a variety of points of view that is useful and important to their lives. Information services shall be provided through whatever format is available and appropriate to the information sought. The source of this information shall be a balanced data base which shall be planned and maintained or accessed by the citizens and library staff.

Approved: Livermore Library Board
                      5/12/81

LIVERMORE PUBLIC LIBRARY

BACKGROUND STATEMENT

INFORMATION SERVICES

The public library has a responsibility to provide access for citizens to information that is useful and import to their lives.

Information is defined as "The communication or reception of knowledge or intelligence." There is no way to judge the importance of one type of information to any one person. The library will not judge types of information on a scale of value, but will judge the practicality of organizing and communicating information to the public. There are two major ways the library organizes and provides access to information:

1.   The staff selects a format which is useful for its informational content and organizes that format for optimum public use. The major system for making access to the information possible for the greatest number of people is a program of home loan of information.

2.   A second level of making access to the information available to the public is information assistance to the public when, home loan , self-service use of catalogs, or browsing does not provide the information the library user needs. This form of information access has two major elements:

           a.   walk-in reference - information assistance by staff interview

           b.   Phone service reference - information assistance by staff interview

The library provides direct staff assistance to users by personal interview when the user is unable to organize an effective self-help search. Assistance to patrons in this way is important because some information needs are complex, or inter-disciplinary, and cut across types of information delivery, areas of knowledge, or the search for the information requires specific skills available only in library science training.

The staff of this library will develop an information data base useful in assisting information seekers in finding out what they want to know. That data base includes, but is not limited to:

--the library's book collection, circulating and reference;

--the library's other format collections such as video tapes, audio cassettes and electronic information resources;

--information files'

--information sources, such as other libraries, businesses, non-profit organizations, any source that has the information a patron needs.

--a staff members individual knowledge of a subject area.

These are the criteria for developing these information elements:

--information will be accurate;

--information will be balanced. If there are points of view involved, all points of view will be represented as possible;

--information will be organized at appropriate levels of depth. Information for children and information for adults will differ in the language complexity and idea complexity involved. The library will attempt to have introductory or simply organized and stated information for adults and children, intermediate or moderately complex organized stated information and advanced information which will be complex both in depth and in the presentation and language used.

The staff will continually work to balance these levels of depth and coverage. The staff of the public library will decide what information can be collected, organized, and delivered to the public based on these criteria.

There are fundamental disciplines of knowledge that affect all learning and practical application of information. These are philosophy; theology; the social sciences; the language arts and sciences; the pure sciences; the applied sciences or technology; the arts; both fine and performing; literature; history and geographic description of the world; and the history of human beings in biography.

The staff of the public library will plan for and work for a collection of informational formats and resources that provide:

1.	A basic background in all these disciplines (introductory level)

2.	An intermediate data base on all these disciplines

3.	An in-depth information program on all these disciplines.

In addition the staff will seek opinions from a representative cross section of the

community and investigate in the standard methodology approved in library science all specific local community interests. The staff will plan for a program of information services based on specific local information needs as well as the representative information in the classic disciplines. The staff will establish a plan for the balance of standard information data and local interest information data and regularly renew and revise that plan. Criteria for the inclusion of information in a data base for information services will involve:

        --the accuracy and reliability of the information;

        --the costs of obtaining the information to use with the public;

        --the efficient possibilities of organizing, storing, and delivering the information to the public;

        --the public need for the information as analyzed by the staff.

Need criteria will be based on:

        --the numbers of people potentially served;

        --the critical quality for people of the information;

        --the potential for access to the information through other information sources.

        In addition the staff will plan for and organize services for the maximum public equity possible. A major operational concern will be as equal access as possible to information for all users.

        The staff will plan for and implement all technological applications which make providing information to a mass public efficient, economical, and effective. The staff will regularly review, revise, and restate goals and specific objectives for providing information services to the public. The staff will plan for and implement a program of making self-help use of information in the library practical, effective, efficient, and of optimum value to the patron.