

Collection Management Transition Team

Interim Report

September 11, 2000

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Collection Management Transition Team

Committee Members

Karen Anderson	Hamilton Public Library
Helen Benoit	Hamilton Public Library
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Sophie Gorski - Vice chair/secretary	Dundas Public Library
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Debbie Rudderham - Chair	Hamilton Public Library
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Coordinating Committee Liaison: Barbara Baker

Collection Management Transition Team

Introduction

Merging three different library systems presents an often formidable and frequently exciting number of challenges. One of the most challenging and exciting aspects of this process is amalgamating the three collection management systems. The team envisions not merely an amalgamation, but rather a consolidation of the best elements of each system with the new opportunities presented to us by developing technologies.

The collection management process is very different in each library system. Dundas Public Library is the smallest system with only one location and the staff who work directly with the public also select materials. Wentworth Libraries has 15 locations and uses one staff to select materials for all locations. A successful system of communications has been developed to bridge any gaps that may exist between the front line staff and the selector. Hamilton Public Library uses a more decentralized system in which over 40 selectors participate in the process. All branch and department managers, children's librarians, Central and branch librarians and some library technicians are involved in the selection or weeding process.

These collection management systems have been successful in responding to their communities; however, no one existing system is feasible in the larger amalgamated library system.

After contacting other medium to large libraries across Canada (see Appendix #6), the Team realized that there is no existing model suitable for the Amalgamated Library System. The size and configuration of the new system is unique and its collection management needs cannot be met by any of the existing models used in the other systems.

Experiences of other libraries have shown:

- 1. Libraries that amalgamate take several years to reach a truly workable system.**
- 2. Committees should be avoided, minimized or kept very small in size.**
- 3. Budget decisions should be made by as few people as possible.**
- 4. Local purchasing should be discouraged.**
- 5. It is preferable to create a new system since merely merging the existing systems leads to dysfunctional layers.**
- 6. Creating a collection management system is not a stagnant process. Constant review is necessary to respond to changing community needs and changing and developing technologies (as reflected in the Strategic Directions Council Strategic Planning document).**

After examining collection management processes in our libraries, several other Canadian libraries, and considering the needs of the Amalgamated Library System, the team created a draft model for collection management. Central to our considerations were the principles of streamlining existing processes and creating a systems approach to collection management.

Collection Management Transition Team

OPERATIONAL PRINCIPLES

1. A system wide selection process will access staff expertise i.e. Collection Specialists will order for the whole system. Community profiles and collection guidelines will be developed by branch/department managers in consultation with the Collection Specialists.
2. Collection guidelines will be developed for each branch and department using both the definitions determined by the service tier system and community profiles. Branch/Department managers will be responsible for developing these guidelines with input from staff and with the assistance of the Planning department. Both the collection guidelines and profiles must be kept current by annual reviews.
3. Collection levels will be established appropriate to the size and role of each location within the service tiers. The development of core collections will be an integral part of collection development e.g. reference materials, picture books, periodicals, standing orders.
4. Collection Specialists will select materials in all formats within their subject area.
5. Purchasing will be centralized with the increased use of ARPs (automatic release plans).
6. The fund structure will be simplified in order to become flexible and responsive to changing community needs.

Collection Management Transition Team

COLLECTION MANAGEMENT MODEL

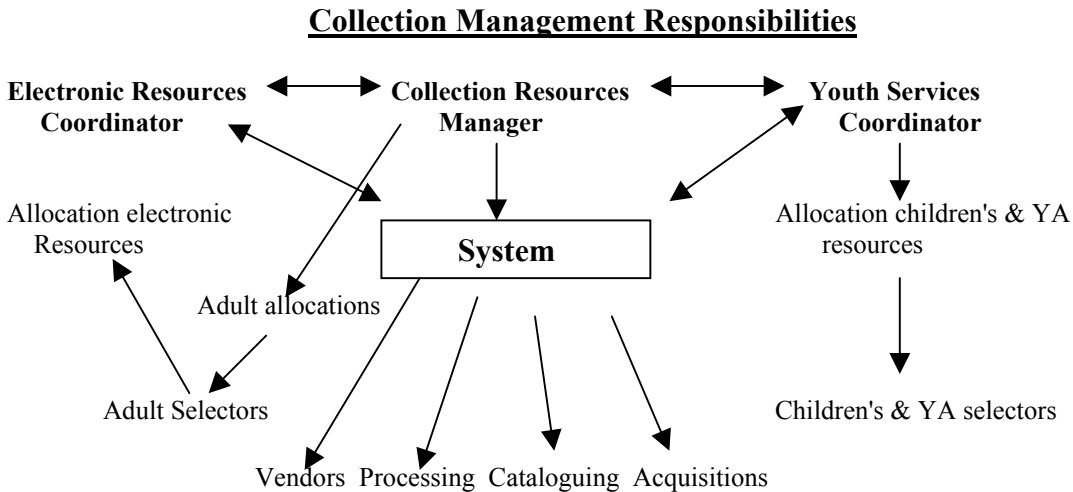
Team priorities used in the creation of the collection model were:

1. Streamlining - to make the best possible use of human and material resources
2. System Approach - to ensure that divisions between the Central, Resource, and Branch libraries are not created and the public have equitable access to materials.

Draft Model:

The team proposes a model in which Collection Specialists select for the system across all formats with input from public service staff.

The Functional Organization Chart for this model is detailed below.



The Collection Resources Manager (see Appendix #2) is a senior administration position and has responsibilities for both collection management and all technical services functions. This position has system responsibility for all acquisition, processing and cataloguing functions for adult, juvenile and electronic materials, for the compilation and presentation of the materials budget to the management team and for reviewing Holds Alerts and patron and ILLO requests. In addition, the Collection Resources Manager is responsible for the allocation and monitoring of adult material budgets, overseeing selection guidelines, supervising the Adult Collection Specialists and liaising with public services.

The Collection Management team proposes that a new position, that of **Collection Assistant**, be created to assist the manager with collection related activities.

The **Youth Services Coordinator** is a senior administration position, responsible for the allocation and monitoring of juvenile material budgets, overseeing juvenile selection guidelines, supervising the juvenile Collection Specialists and liaising with public services.

The **Electronic Services Coordinator** is a senior administration position, responsible for the allocation and monitoring of electronic database resources. The Collection Specialists will forward recommendations to the Electronic Services Coordinator for consideration.

The **Collection Specialist** (see Appendix # 3) is a librarian who has expertise within a defined subject area or has knowledge of the needs of a specialized group. The Collection Specialists will select materials in their assigned areas for the system across all formats. In the case of electronic database resources the Collection Specialists will have responsibility for the identification of materials. Requests for these materials will be forwarded to the Electronic Resources Coordinator. Collection Specialists will also have public service responsibilities.

The team proposes that there be 12 Collection Specialists for adult materials, 4 Children's Collection Specialists and 1 Young Adult Collection Specialist. The areas of responsibility that we propose are as follows:

Multilingual	Government documents	Young Adult
Large Print and CED	Health	Pre-School
Social Sciences - 2 selectors	Fine Arts	School Age
Science	Music	Non-Print (J)*
Technology	Language & Literature/	Electronic (J)*
Business & Law	Fiction/Popular Materials	

The size and scope of these responsibilities will vary and will impact on the public service duties of each position.

* Due to the organization of reviewing journals, vendors and the expertise of the children's librarians we are proposing that non-print and electronic resources each be selected by a single children's librarian for the system.

The Branch Manager 's(see Appendix #4) role in the collection management process will be to shape the collections by creating, reviewing, and monitoring the collection guidelines and branch profiles for each location. These are the tools that the Collection Specialists will use to make materials selections. Branch Managers or designates will also create the profiles for the Automatic Release Plans in consultation with the Collection Specialists. The team also proposes that all Branch Managers have a role in the system-wide selection process. Each Adult Collection Specialist will be paired with a Branch Manager, who will act as a resource for selection of branch materials. Together, they will write, review and monitor the collection guidelines for their designated subject area(s) which detail the collection breadth and depth for each service tier.

The Branch Manager will have other responsibilities that include staff orientation and training in the use of the collection, in particular, electronic and web-based products. Managers will need to be navigators for both staff and public as electronic resources become increasingly available. As well, the reorganization of children's services increases the need for Branch Managers to assume responsibility for communicating system decisions in children's services and for promoting library services within the community.

Challenges

Communicating the needs of the branches and the communities to the Collection Specialists is a new challenge that the Amalgamated Library System faces, and will require continual cooperation. It will be very important to set up a communication system which is both formal and informal. Although we will be creating a large library system in which fewer numbers of staff will be actually selecting material, it is important that all staff feel they have input into the process.

The Collection Specialists at Central will not only be selecting materials across formats for the whole system, but in most cases they will be ordering in larger subject areas than at present. Because of this larger scope questions about the qualifications for these positions have arisen. Should they be asked to be specialists in specific subject areas as some are at present or should they be asked to have wider backgrounds e.g. Social Sciences, Pure Sciences, Fine Arts? The job descriptions for these positions definitely have to be rewritten and the job levels confirmed.

The Branch/Department manager's roles will change to one of shaping collections through diligent writing and reviewing of collection guidelines and profiles as well as regular weeding of their collections. The managers will also be involved in

writing the description of collection levels for specific subject areas and acting as branch resources for the Collection Specialists. It is also hoped that the branch managers will take a large role in the use of these collections through instructing and encouraging both staff and the public in the use of all the materials but particularly the electronic resources and web-based products. This area of "coaching" or "navigating" is an important public service function that most managers have been unable to find sufficient time to pursue in the past. Finally in many circumstances the managers will be the most visible library staff members in the community, representing the library at community events and serving on community and city-wide committees. These are in fact important collection management functions as they serve to promote library collection to the public and serve to gather information as to what the public wants to see in their libraries.

The role of the librarians in the resource libraries will also change with this new collection management system. Since the branch manager in these locations will be managing a larger library with more staff the team assumes that these librarians will assist the manager in many of the tasks described in this report. The branch librarians will be involved in providing input into the branch profiles and guidelines, in providing input to the Collection Specialists, in shaping the branch collections through assisting with the profiles for the ARPs and in weeding the collections. As well, we assume that the branch librarians, along with the Branch Managers will help the other staff and the public in navigating their way through the electronic resources and will represent the library in their communities.

There will be a mechanism developed to ensure that all staff can give input into the selection process.

Time Lines

It is the desire of the Collection Management Team that this model be put in effect between April and June 2001.

Collection Management Transition Team

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **A system wide selection process be instituted.**
2. **Collection Resources Manager be responsible for the compilation and presentation of the system's materials budget; budget allocation, collection guidelines, material selection for adult materials; and cataloguing, processing, acquisitions and vendor dealings for all library materials.**
3. **Collection Specialists be responsible for selecting materials in all formats and for recommending titles in electronic formats for the system.**
4. **Branch/department managers be responsible for shaping collections through the creation of specific branch profiles and collection guidelines and by assisting the Adult Collection Specialists in creating guidelines detailing collection levels in specific subject areas by service tier.**
5. **An increased number of ARPs (automatic release plans) be used, particularly in the acquisition of more popular materials.**
6. **An increased number of leasing plans be used, particular in the acquisition of materials which are in high demand for a limited time or which need to be updated on an annual basis.**
7. **Electronic resources become a more integral part of our collections by having Collection Specialists submit requests for orders to the Electronic Resources Coordinator.**
8. **A mechanism be created for the continuous evaluation of the collection management process.**

Appendix #1

GLOSSARY

Collection guidelines: Detailed description of the materials which would include topic/Dewey range, size, breadth, depth, intended audience, currency and special notes. Collection guidelines detail what is to be included and excluded at both the service tier level and the branch/department level.

Collection specialist: A collection specialist is a librarian who has expertise within a defined subject area or who has knowledge of the needs of a specialized group e.g. children, young adults, multilingual, literacy, ESL and the disabled.

Community profile: Demographics and information gathered from social planning, social agencies and information gathered from the automation system profiles e.g. teens, seniors, preschoolers. The profile also takes into account materials which area being requested at the particular location.

Appendix #2

COLLECTION RESOURCES MANAGER

Responsibilities

- Supervise Technical Services
- Supervise Collection Resources Supervisor
- Supervise collection management responsibilities of Collection Specialists
- Liaise with persons in charge of Youth Services and Electronic Resources concerning system issues relating to collection management
- Compile materials budget for the system and present it to the Management Team
- Determine adult materials budget allocations
- Supervise the creation, review and maintenance of adult collection guidelines, profiles and core collections
- Monitor all materials budgets and distribute appropriate reports
- Select, negotiate with, and monitor library vendors for adult and juvenile materials and electronic resources
- Investigate new or expanded purchase plans e.g. ARPs, blanket order plans for adult and juvenile materials
- Monitor existing purchase plans for adult and juvenile materials
- Consult with Collection Specialists and Branch/Department Managers on an ongoing basis concerning budget allocations, the selection process and specific selection issues
- Review the Holds Alerts, patron and ILLO requests and initiate appropriate action.

Appendix #3

COLLECTION SPECIALIST

Responsibilities

- Select materials for the system in a specified subject area, across all formats
- Liaise with appropriate branch/department managers e.g. receive input on purchases, gaps in collections
- Write and review system collection guidelines (according to Service Tiers) with designated managers
- Weed collection sections as designated by department manager and submit orders to fill gaps
- Assist branch managers with weeding as required and review last copy discards, submit orders to fill gaps
- Network with community agencies
- Perform information duties as assigned (problem of number of hours as negotiated between dual supervisors i.e. department manager and Collection Resources Manager)

Appendix #4

BRANCH/DEPARTMENT MANAGER

Responsibilities

- Perform management duties appropriate to service tier
- Ensure staff orientation and training in use of the collection, in particular the electronic and web-based products
- Liase with community agencies and organizations
- Write and review individual branch/department community profile
- Write and review individual branch/department collection guidelines
- In conjunction with designated Collection Specialist write and review specified section of system collection guidelines (for all service tiers)
- Provide input to appropriate Collection Specialist for branch acquisitions
- Weed branch/department collection or ensure that weeding is done according to system weeding schedule

Appendix #5

WEEDING RESPONSIBILITIES

The weeding of items from particular collections and the discarding of materials from the system are important aspects of the proposed collection management system. In order to ensure these activities occur on a regular and system-wide basis, the responsibilities of the staff members involved are outlined below.

Branch Manager Service Tiers 1 & 2

- weed adult and juvenile non-fiction, adult fiction and non-print according to collection guidelines, weeding guidelines and weeding schedule
- determine gaps in collection and submit requests to appropriate Collection Specialist or Children's Librarian

Branch/Department Manager Service Tiers 3 & 4

- ensure that weeding is done by Collection Specialists and other designated librarians according to collection guidelines, weeding guidelines and weeding schedule
- ensure that gaps are identified and requests submitted to appropriate collection specialists

Collection Resources Manager

- establish weeding guidelines and schedule in consultation with branch/department managers, Collection specialists, Youth Coordinator, Children's Librarians
- consult with appropriate staff as required to ensure that weeding schedule is followed

Youth Services Coordinator

- ensure that weeding is done by appropriate Children's Librarian according to collection guidelines, weeding guidelines and weeding schedule
- ensure that gaps are identified and requests submitted to appropriate Children's Librarian

Appendix #6

SUMMARY OF THE COLLECTION MANAGEMENT PRACTICES OF SELECTED LIBRARIES

- HALIFAX**
- process took 4 years to create and is still being refined
 - stress importance of good branch profiles i.e. using demographics, circulation data, input from branch managers and public service staff
 - profiles for subject areas were developed by branches and submitted to the Selectors
 - each Selector has a binder which includes selection levels, community agency feedback, notes on weeding and accepted practices i.e. no workbooks purchased
 - Selectors assist branch managers with weeding
 - Selectors encouraged to develop expertise and share it with staff in branches via branch presentations, training, etc.
 - minimum of local purchases permitted
 - use Whitehots, standing orders
 - librarians have final responsibility in selection and weeding - technicians or library assistants may be asked to give advice if they have an area of expertise

- OTTAWA**
- centralized collection department, part of Technical Services
 - 12 librarians responsible for ordering in specific areas, in all formats
 - budgets are divided by subject area not branch/department
 - adult selectors in branches send orders to the Collection Development Coordinator
 - generic profiles (based on the 3 levels of branches) are used for paperbacks, CD's
 - Automatic Release Plans are used for 200 best selling authors and subjects not covered by a specialist
 - rotating blocks for Large Print, French and heritage languages
 - branches are responsible for their own weeding
 - limited local purchase permitted, only when speed is an issue

- TORONTO**
- Collection Development Department Head and 7 collection coordinators are responsible for budget allocation and selection
 - also have committees with representation from across the system e.g. 3 basic Adult committees, 1 committee each for juvenile, teens, research and reference, multilingual and electronic resources
 - use ARPs for new A-V materials, paperbacks and comics
 - branches select replacements and have a budget for extra paperbacks, etc.

- EDMONTON**
- centralized selection done by teams - Fiction, Non-fiction, Juvenile (total of approximately 17 people meeting once or twice per month)
 - plans are to reduce the number of people involved in these committees when system is more accepted
 - juvenile materials ordered through reviewing journals not hands on examination
 - separate budget for patron requests
 - Collection Manager reports to Manager of Acquisitions and both sit in on selection team meetings
 - Collection Manager weeds branch collections, does special collection projects, watches trends
 - local purchasing used for CDs only
 - budget: 4 general categories Adult Print, Adult Non-print, Juvenile Print, Juvenile Non-print with subcategories e.g. fiction, Large Print, reference
 - branches have small discretionary funds

- CALGARY**
- centralized system with 2 adult Selectors and 1 juvenile Selector
 - these 3 people select materials across all formats for the system
 - Selectors work full time in this capacity, other librarians spend little time on selection
 - only exceptions are 3 specialists for literacy, multilingual and local history
 - budget is subdivided by subject areas across the system
 - replacement budget is separate, divided by branch/department
 - magazines are selected by committee, standing orders are reviewed every 3 years
 - annual meetings are held with subject specialists to examine each collection
 - regular managers' meetings focus on collections and budgets, establishing priorities
 - use profiles for paperbacks ordering
 - weeding is done by branch/department staff and collection specialists

VANCOUVER

- selection process is decentralized i.e. performed primarily at branch/department level
- subject specialists from the Central library generate lists weekly which staff can use to place orders
- catalogues are sent out weekly to everyone who orders
- Acquisitions staff do considerable entry of order information into library database so that selectors can use it - this requires much editing and is very labour intensive
- as well, several committees order specific material e.g. fiction, best sellers
- found rental plans to be too time consuming
- all paperbacks are purchased locally, sent directly to branch/department not Technical Services
- paperbacks are all entered generically on Dynix
- budget is divided by branch/department except for electronic resources and literacy

Appendix #7

PARKING LOT ISSUES

1. Dual supervision of Collection Specialists i.e. by their department manager and by the Collection Resources Manager.
2. Work load of the Adult Collection Specialists e.g. should there be a limit to the amount of time they should regularly spend on the information desk and if so, who fills in the gaps?
3. Provide input concerning the collection management responsibilities of the Collection Resources Manager, the Collection Resources Supervisor-Selection, the Collection Specialists and the Branch/Department Managers.
4. Development of core collections, for specific materials e.g. reference, standing orders and periodicals.
5. Development of guidelines for collection levels, by service tier, in each of the 12 subject areas defined by the Adult Collection Specialists
6. Rotating collections - do we set up a system for certain materials in certain service tiers?
7. Problem of theft versus demand for popular materials e.g. music CD's and videos
 - investigate system currently being used at HPL for popular videos i.e. house videos at another branch and Central patrons can access them through Holds
 - is there a danger that this will mean that patrons at certain locations will not have direct access to the very popular materials?
8. Need to stress to all public service librarians - at Central and branches, Branch/department managers - that they will all be involved in collection management in some manner e.g. input to selectors, weeding, writing and reviewing collection guidelines and branch/department profiles
9. Automatic Release Plans - what areas are possible for expansion
 - e.g. Video - feature films
 - Mass market paperbacks - Adult, Young Adult and Juvenile
 - CD ROMs
 - CDs and cassettes (music)
 - Best sellers
 - Spoken word cassettes/CDs
 - Comics

10. Rental Plans - what areas are possible for expansion

e.g. Best sellers

Spoken word cassettes/CDs

Travel books

Large Print

Computer books

11. Vertical file - indicate how to eliminate the need for vertical files

12. Literacy materials - suggest that in the branches these materials are not separated but rather indicated with a very visible label

