



# Library Board Report

**To:** Chair and Members of the Bruce County Public Library Board

**From:** Andrew Brown, Collection Maintenance Coordinator

**Date:** March 20, 2024

**Re:** Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Collection Update

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## Staff Recommendation:

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Collection Update report is for information.

## Background:

Bruce County Public Library (BCPL) recognizes the need for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) within the library collection, especially as demographics change in Bruce County. This means including books and materials that are written by, on the topic of, or inclusive of marginalized people in society. Including DEI content promotes different perspectives to some while reflecting the experiences of others.

BCPL uses Collection HQ (a collection evaluation tool) to track the proportion of items in the collection that contain at least one DEI marker. A committee of Branch Supervisors has been convened to determine which markers BCPL should focus on based on relevance to Bruce County communities. The purpose is to increase the DEI content in the BCPL children's collection. The markers that BCPL is working to improve are:

- Asian
- Black
- Disabilities & Neurodiversity
- Indigenous
- Middle Eastern and North African
- Multicultural
- Sexuality and Gender
- Substance Abuse & Addictions

The committee audited a sample of the children's collection marked as DEI by Collection HQ to see if they met the DEI criteria. Some titles did not meet the criteria for DEI and were

exempted from DEI status. For example, *The Production of Silk* is a juvenile non-fiction book about silkworms that does not focus on culturally relevant information.

In 2022, BCPL had 14.9% DEI content in the overall collection, including Adult, Juvenile, and Teen titles. According to Collection HQ, the Canadian average is roughly 15%, while the US average is roughly 17%. BCPL now sits at 19.7% DEI content. More than 3,000 titles featuring DEI content have been added to the collection. In the eight focused categories, the Children's collection is growing as well, from 9.5% to 13.9% of the entire children's collection. The increase is due to excluding DEI materials from weeding activities and ordering more DEI content for the collection. Some content has been identified using American Library Association (ALA) curated lists.

### **NEXT STEPS:**

BCPL aims to increase the DEI content such that the eight focused markers will account for 20% of the children's collection. Currently, these topics make up 13.9% of the children's collection. This has grown from 9.5% in 2022. Growth is accelerating as publishers produce more DEI material. Through continued weeding practices and consultation of professionally curated DEI lists, this number will continue to grow.

### **Financial/Staffing/Legal/IT Considerations:**

There are no financial, staffing, legal or IT considerations associated with this report.

### **Interdepartmental Consultation:**

None.

### **Link to Strategic Plan:**

Enhancing DEI content in our collection contributes to our strategic goal of being a "Trusted Community Connector". The inclusion of DEI materials will help everyone feel welcome and part of the community.