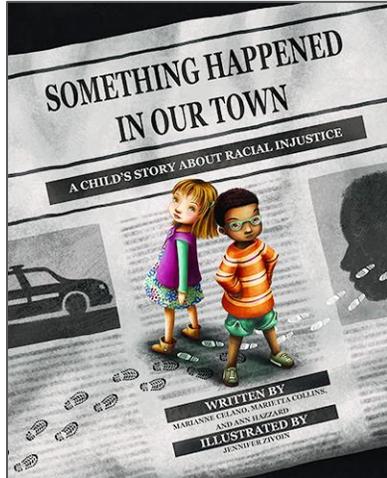


WARNING TO PARENTS OF ELEMENTARY-AGE CHILDREN

A dangerous book is being used in elementary schools to make children afraid of the police.

By Barb Anderson

On October 30, 2020 the Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association wrote a warning letter to Governor Tim Walz regarding the children's story book *Something Happened in Our Town*. They requested that the state "cease the recommendation and use of this book as a form of instruction for elementary



aged children..." This story is divisive and dangerous and has no place in our public schools. **It only serves to demonize the police department and suggests that children should be afraid of police officers.**

In the story, a white family is talking to their children about an incident in which a black man was shot by the police. The older sister Liz says, "The cops shot him because he was Black." The parents do not correct her and Liz adds, "Some White people still think most Black men and boys are dangerous, even though they're not."

When little Emma asks "Was the man that got shot dangerous?" the mother replies "No...Shooting him was a mistake. It was a mistake that is part of a pattern...this pattern is being nice to White people and mean to Black people. It's an unfair pattern."

In another house a black family comments about the incident. When Josh asks whether the police officer who did the shooting will go to jail, the father replies "...he won't go to jail...Cops stick up for each other...And they don't like Black men." He concludes: "...we can't always count on them to do what's right."

When Josh asks, "What if it was a White man in the car?" his father replies, "They probably wouldn't have even stopped the car." The mother adds, "Sometimes White people are treated better than Black people. But it's not right."

The Minnesota Departments of Education and Health have given their stamp of approval to the use of this dangerous book in our elementary schools. *Something Happened in Our Town* depicts our police as racist and violent. This false depiction sows racial hatred used as a political ploy. It is not only wrong, but it is also a danger to the public safety of our communities. **Stereotyping police officers as biased and dangerous puts people of all races at great risk and undermines the ability of law enforcement to protect us all.**

It's time we all contact Governor Tim Walz and urge him to stop the use of this book in our elementary classrooms. Teaching kids to fear the police sends a dangerous and dishonest message to our children and is unfair to our dedicated police officers.

Write: Governor Tim Walz; 130 State Capitol; 75 Rev Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd; St. Paul, MN 55155