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STATEMENT FROM THE INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM ROUND TABLE OF THE NEBRASKA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

May 10, 2021

The Intellectual Freedom Round Table of the Nebraska Library Association (NLA), and the association as a whole, is troubled by the recent decision by Papillion La Vista Community Schools to remove *Something Happened in Our Town: A Child's Story About Racial Injustice* by Marianne Celano, Marietta Collins, and Ann Hazzard from an instructional resource list. The Papillion La Vista Community Schools administration bypassed its own established policies regarding challenged instructional materials by not consulting teachers, providing alternative activities, or requesting a review board to assess the material. NLA is concerned that this sets a dangerous precedent whereby school administrators dictate what course materials are permitted, censoring the ideas and facts that they disagree with based on their personal or political viewpoints.

NLA endorses the Papillion La Vista Education Association's statement opposing Papillion La Vista Community Schools' decision. Additionally, after a review of the book, NLA recommends *Something Happened in Our Town* for educational and personal use. This decision is based on the value that this material provides with the story as presented, the qualifications of the authors, and the extensive resource list provided within the book itself for parents and educators.

It is essential for our communities to recognize and understand that systemic racism and discrimination exist in our country. NLA asserts that an essential first step toward true racial equality involves engaging in difficult, but honest conversations. Resources like *Something Happened in Our Town* should be accessible by educators and parents if these conversations are to be meaningful. The NLA respectfully requests that Papillion La Vista Community Schools reconsider their harmful decision.