

# Responding to Bias in School

## Prepare yourself

- Be proactive with class/school climate.
- Make a commitment to speak up.
- Identify language you are comfortable with.
- Practice with trusted colleagues.
- Be confident and ready to take appropriate action.
- Plan to encourage positive and ally behaviors.
- Learn more if you need to.
- Understand change requires consistent responses over time.

## Know the strategies

- Put safety first, support targeted person(s).
- Denounce the act and communicate why it's hurtful.
- Avoid labeling people, describe behaviors.
- Share the expected behavior.
- Address all who may be impacted.
- Promote healing and relationship restoration.
- Know that you are doing the right thing.
- Be patient and believe we can help kids and positively influence our school climate.
- Notify your administrator.

**Pittsford Schools**



## Prepare your students

- Help build relationships in class.
- Establish norms, including “everyone will feel safe here.”
- Tell students they can interrupt bias and make a difference for their peers.
- In age appropriate ways, talk about why some words are hurtful.
- Share context as age appropriate (history, etc.).
- Talk about tone and temperament in communication.
- Model being proactive and responsive.
- Model notifying a person in authority.
- Explicitly teach SEL skills: cooperation, working through conflicts, relationship skills.

## Seize the moment

It's OK to talk about bias based upon gender, sexual orientation, religion, race, ethnicity, disability, physical appearance, etc. as it occurs. Talk to your Principal or Student Services Department if you want more information. It's OK to say you don't know about something and that you will find out. We will approach our learning from a collaborative perspective and a growth framework. We will provide assistance, training and reassurance to promote inclusion and equity in safe and supportive schools.

# Tips for Responding to Bias Incidents at School

## Question

- “Why do you say that? What do you mean?”
- “Tell me more.”
- “Did you mean for what you said to be hurtful?”
- “How might someone feel if they heard you say that?”

## Interrupt

- “Let’s pause for a minute...I heard something that offends me.”
- “I don’t find ethnic jokes funny.”
- “Stop—that is not acceptable behavior in my classroom/in the school/anywhere.”
- “That language is hurtful to people and cannot be used. Others do not feel safe when you say/do that.”

## Echo

- If someone has already called out or interrupted bias, be a second or third voice to reinforce the message.
- “I heard someone say that word and I was shocked too at that language.”
- “I agree that what you did/said was not right.”
- “My thanks to the two students who jumped in to be allies to stop that language/behavior.”

## Educate

- “Words can hurt, whether they are said in private, in a group or in public.”
- “Each person has the right to dress as they wish, when you tease/gossip about that, it is hurtful.”
- “It’s OK to want to learn more about someone’s culture, clothes, etc. and it’s important to show respect when you do that.”
- Share places where students can get more information.