Bias Incident
If it happens at your school...

1. SECURE
   Ensure the safety of the victim and the community of students the bias was directed against.

2. INVESTIGATE
   Swiftly and seriously respond to all bias complaints/tips. Get all the facts early to determine a school-wide or community-wide response.

3. PRESERVE EVIDENCE
   Take photos; do not delete or discard anything. If it may be a crime, do not disturb the scene. You are not the police.

4. YOUR COMMUNITY
   For additional support, you can also contact:
   1) Michigan Department of Civil Rights (MDCR) within 180 days to file a complaint, request assistance, report harassment or a hate crime. Call 1-800-482-3604 or visit www.michigan.gov/MDCR and click “How We Can Help.”
   2) Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) at 313-965-2323.
   3) U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Unit at 313-226-9151.
   4) Southern Poverty Law Center at http://www.splcenter.org/report hate to add to the national reports being tracked here.

5. DENOUNCE THE BIAS/HATE
   Remain firmly in support of the victim, the targeted student population and the larger marginalized community represented by the students.

6. BE OBJECTIVE
   When speaking about the offender, focus on justice, fairness and not blame.

7. ADVOCATE
   Use the bias incident to encourage school and community learning, unity, and growth toward fighting bias.

NOTE: A bias incident may qualify as a hate crime under state and/or federal law. By definition, all hate crimes are bias incidents but not all bias incidents are hate crimes. If you think a bias incident that happened in your school may be a crime, you are advised to contact your local authorities for assistance.

YOUR COMMUNITY
Upon the first suspicions of bias, contact your local and/or statewide advocacy organizations representing the targeted student population. The school should be guided by the affected community’s firsthand knowledge of the bias; this will ensure that the school is supporting the targeted community effectively and that the school understands the best ways to assist.

—Providence College

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Michigan Organization on Adolescent Sexual Health
P.O. Box 1386 • East Lansing, MI 48826 • (517) 318-1414 • info@moash.org

*Adapted from the tolerance.org Teaching Tolerance article titled “Identifying and Responding to Bias Incidents” (www.tolerance.org/professional-development/identifying-and-responding-to-bias-incidents) and from Providence College’s bias response protocol (www.providence.edu/student-affairs/bias-response/Pages/key-definitions.aspx).