



## **Community Report on Arcola Lake Elementary School**

***A Traditional Parent's Perspective on School Policies and Environment***

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### Summary and Overall Rating

Arcola Lake Elementary School is a Title I public school in Miami, serving students from PreK to grade 5. It maintains a stable and academically improving environment, but operates within Miami Dade County Public Schools, which actively promotes gender identity affirmation and LGBTQ inclusion starting in early grades.

From a conservative or faith-based viewpoint, the school earns a **3.5 out of 10** score for alignment with traditional educational values. While the campus culture is moderate and calm, district-level directives guide policy and practice in areas that may conflict with more conservative expectations.

Continue reading for a full breakdown of how this rating was determined.

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### School Information

**Name:** Arcola Lake Elementary School

**Address:** 1037 NW 81st Street, Miami, FL 33150

**Grades:** PreK to 5

**District:** Miami Dade County Public Schools

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### 1. General Overview

The school enrolls around 556 students (October 2023) with approximately 35 full-time teachers, resulting in a student–teacher ratio of close to 16 to 1. The campus features a main building, portable classrooms, a library, and outdoor recreational spaces. It is also part of the district's early childhood initiatives.

### 2. Academic Standing

The school's state grade improved from a B in 2022–23 to an A in 2023–24. About 56 percent of students meet or exceed proficiency in math and reading. It offers Gifted & Talented services, VPK, after-school care, arts, music, and STEM programs. Performance is above average among similar Florida schools.

### 3. Student Demographics

The population is diverse: approximately 57 percent Black, 41 percent Hispanic, and a small percentage of other ethnicities. Roughly 76 percent of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, showing significant economic need. The school supports an equity focus.

#### **4. Facilities and Programs**

Beyond standard classrooms and a library, Arcola Lake includes before- and after-care services, a special education center, art and music instruction, robotics, Spanish language classes, and clubs such as arts, STEM, and Future Educators of America. The school uses structured progress monitoring with regular walkthroughs and data reviews.

#### **5. Values and Cultural Environment**

##### **5.1 District Policies on Gender and LGBTQ Inclusion**

Miami Dade County Public Schools include gender identity and sexual orientation in its anti-discrimination policies. Staff are expected to respect students' pronouns and names. The SAFE Network program promotes LGBTQ affirming spaces in elementary schools. These practices may conflict with concerns about age-appropriateness and parental rights.

##### **5.2 School-Level Practice**

There are no recorded incidents or controversies at Arcola Lake related to LGBTQ issues. Nonetheless, the school follows all district mandates. Parents should consider discussing with school leadership to clarify how identity policies are applied in classrooms and daily routines.

#### **6. School Board and Political Climate**

In 2022, the school board rejected LGBTQ History Month recognition and inclusion of LGBTQ history in high school lessons. Elementary schools were not affected. The district's inclusive policies remain intact, reflecting a tension between state restrictions and local enforcement.

#### **7. Parent Concerns**

Conservative or religious parents may raise these issues:

- Early exposure to gender identity and LGBTQ topics
- Policies allowing identity changes without parental notification
- A shift in priorities from core academics to social ideology

Though Arcola Lake shows no activism, its alignment with progressive district policies could still concern traditional families.

#### **8. Conclusion**

Arcola Lake Elementary is a stable, academically improving school with diverse offerings and solid support structures. The learning environment is calm and collaborative. However,

conservative families should note that the school operates within a district that actively affirms gender identity and LGBTQ inclusion in its early grade practices.

Parents seeking an education closely aligned with traditional values should engage with the school leadership and assess whether the policy environment meets their expectations.

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### **Conservatism Alignment Rating: 3.5 out of 10**

#### **Rating Breakdown:**

**1. Policy Environment: 2 out of 10**

The district enforces progressive inclusion policies that support LGBTQ identity expression even in elementary grades.

**2. School-Level Practice: 5 out of 10**

No activism is reported; however, school staff implement district policy without resistance.

**3. Classroom Exposure: 4 out of 10**

No formal LGBTQ instruction; students may still encounter affirming language or symbols through environment and staff behavior.

**4. Community and Cultural Tone: 6 out of 10**

The school serves a diverse, working-class community. The atmosphere is respectful, though district practices dominate the school ethos.

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### **Final Summary for Parents**

For families who prefer a traditional educational environment with limited exposure to gender identity and social ideology discussion, Arcola Lake Elementary may feel out of step with their values. The school's calm and structured atmosphere offers reassurance, but the district's inclusive mandates are in place from PreK and beyond.

#### **Rating: 3.5 out of 10**

Families should engage with school administrators, request policy transparency, and explore alternative schooling options if necessary.