



**Community Report on Claude Pepper Elementary School**  
***A Traditional Parent's Perspective on School Policies and Environment***

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# Community Report on Claude Pepper Elementary School

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

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### Summary and Overall Rating

Claude Pepper Elementary School is a public Title One elementary school located in The Hammocks neighborhood of Miami, serving PreK through fifth grade. The school consistently earns strong academic ratings with A-level performance, particularly in math and reading, supported by a Gifted and Talented program. However, it operates under Miami Dade County Public Schools district-wide policies on gender identity and LGBTQ inclusion from early grades.

From a traditional or faith-based perspective, the school earns a **rating of 3.5 out of 10**. The school delivers solid academics and a safe environment, but district policies and a historical safety incident may give some families pause.

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### School Contact Information

#### School Name

Claude Pepper Elementary School

#### Address

14550 SW 96th Street  
Miami FL 33186

#### Phone

(305) 386 5244

#### Grades

PreK to Five

#### District

Miami Dade County Public Schools

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### 1. General Overview

Claude Pepper serves between 400 and 600 students and has about 36 full-time teachers, resulting in a typical class size of around 12 to 1. As a Title One school it serves a predominantly Hispanic community with varied economic backgrounds. The campus features standard classrooms, playgrounds, a library, media center, STEAM resources and on-site before and after-school care.

## **2. Academic Standing**

The school performs strongly with approximately 72 percent of students proficient in math and 73 percent in reading, surpassing district and often state averages. It consistently ranks among Florida's top 25 percent of elementary schools and regularly earns A ratings. Academic offerings include Gifted and Talented, STEAM integration, reading intervention programs, and community-focused events like literacy nights and science fairs.

## **3. Student Demographics**

Approximately 93 percent of students are Hispanic, with smaller percentages of White, Asian, and Black students. Around 56 percent of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. The school supports English Language Learners and has programs dedicated to academic intervention and special education. Counseling services and family support liaisons are available to help students and families as needed.

## **4. Facilities and Programs**

Claude Pepper boasts a well-equipped campus with modern classrooms, a media center, technology stations, an art and science space, and outdoor learning areas. Beyond core lessons the school offers preschool, after-school programs, Gifted and Talented classes, and enrichment in arts, STEM, physical education, and character-building initiatives. Working parents can take advantage of extended-day care and the PTA offers parent workshops on topics like cyber safety and navigating standardized testing.

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

District policies require staff to respect students' preferred names and pronouns and to complete LGBTQ-inclusive training through the SAFE Network. From a traditional viewpoint this may seem premature and raise concerns about parental authority. Although the school does not actively promote identity topics, district compliance suggests these practices may occur in classrooms or counseling settings.

**Helpful tip for parents:** Consider scheduling a meeting with a school administrator or counselor early on to understand how pronoun usage and identity preference is implemented and to request age-appropriate messaging for your child.

## **6. Recent Negative Incidents or Controversies**

More than ten years ago a safety incident occurred when a nearby escaped prisoner triggered a lockdown at the school. The situation ended safely with no harm to students. School officials have stated that policies like visitor management, perimeter checks, and emergency drills have been updated proactively since then to prevent repeat incidents.

## **7. School Board and Political Context**

In 2022 the Miami Dade School Board opposed recognizing LGBTQ History Month and rejected teaching LGBTQ civil rights in high school; however, district LGBTQ inclusion policies still apply across all grade levels, including elementary schools like Claude Pepper. The ongoing political debate reflects a contrast between statewide conservative pressures and district-level progressive policies.

**Helpful tip for parents:** Stay informed about school board updates—changes in policy or opt-out allowances may directly affect classroom practices going forward.

## **8. Parent Concerns**

Traditional or faith-based families may wish to consider the following:

- Gender identity and pronoun expectations may be introduced to children without prior parental notification
- Parental authority and religious values may feel challenged by mandated inclusivity training
- Supervision and safety policies have improved, but past security concerns suggest ongoing vigilance is wise
- What role do parents play in reviewing classroom lessons or after-school content? Policies may allow limited insight

### **Actions for parents:**

- Join or attend PTA meetings to voice questions and stay connected with school decisions
- Meet with grade-level teachers at the beginning of the year and share your preferences for communication
- Connect with other parents who share your values to discuss approaches and support strategies

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## **9. Final Rating: 3.5 out of 10**

- **Policy Environment – 2**  
District-wide policies enforce early identity inclusion and pronoun use without flexible options
- **School-Level Practice – 5**  
School complies with district rules but does not promote identity programs independently

- **Classroom Exposure – 4**

Students may encounter inclusive language in day-to-day school life though no formal curriculum exists

- **Community and Cultural Tone – 6**

Strong academic reputation and supportive atmosphere, though influenced by district ideology

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### **Final Summary for Parents**

Claude Pepper Elementary offers excellent academics, diverse enrichment programs, and a nurturing school culture. Families who prioritize conservative or faith-based views should be prepared to engage proactively regarding identity-related practices and safety policies. Visiting the school, meeting faculty, and asking targeted questions will help determine if the environment supports your family's values and expectations.