NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

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NAT.	REGISTER OF HISTORIC	

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OMB No. 1024-0018

This form is for use in comparing or requesting determ	NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORICAL MANAGE
Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National F information requested. If any item does not apply to the p materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word proc	NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIA
1. Name of Property	
historic name EDISON PARK ELEMENTARY	SCHOOL
other names/site number Edison Park Creative	ve & Express Elementary School; 8LL150
2. Location	
street & number 2401 Euclid Avenue	N/A not for publication
city or town Fort Myers	N/A vicinity
state FLORIDA code	FL county Lee code071 zip code 33901
3. State/Federal Agency Certification	
Historic Places and meets the procedural and profess meets does not meet the National Register crite nationally distatewide locally. (Dise continue Signature of certifying official/Title Florida State Historic Preservation Officer, 1 State or Federal agency and bureau	2 3/30/49 Bate
Signature of certifying official/Title	Date
State or Federal agency and bureau	<u></u>
4. National Park Service Certification	024
I hereby certify that the property is: entered in the National Register See continuation sheet determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.	O Signature of the Keeper Date of Action
 determined not eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet. 	
 removed from the National Register. other, (explain) 	

Lee Co., FL County and State

5. Classification						
Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include any previously listed resources in the count)				
 private public-local 	 buildings district 	Contributing	Noncontribu	Noncontributing		
public-State public-Federal	 site structure object 	1	1	buildings		
		0	0	sites		
		0	0	structure		
		0	0	objects		
		1	1	total		
Name of related multiple pro (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of			ntributing resources lational Register	previously		
Historic Resources of	Lee County, 1881-1950		0			
6. Function or Use	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·					
Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)		Current Function (Enter categories from in				
EDUCATION/School		EDUCATION/Schoo	<u>bl</u>			
			······································			
7. Description						
Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)		Materials (Enter categories f	rom instructions)			
Late 19th & 20th Century Revivals/Mediterranean Reviva		foundation Co	oncrete			
		walls Stucco				
		roof Tar and	Gravel			
		other Terra-Co	otta			

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

EDISON PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL Name of Property

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- **B** removed from its original location.
- **C** a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- **F** a commemorative property.
- **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References	
Bibliography Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or Previous documentation on file (NPS):	more continuation sheets.) Primary location of additional data:
 preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 36) has been requested previously listed in the National Register previously determined eligible by the National Register designated a National Historic Landmark recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey 	 State Historic Preservation Office Other State Agency Federal agency Local government University Other Name of Repository
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record	#

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

EDUCATION

Period of Significance

1927-1949

Significant Dates

<u>1927</u>

Significant Person

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Arch: Iredell, L.N. Blder: J.M. Lawton Co.

Lee Co., FL County and State

EDISO	N PA	RK	ELEN	ÆNT	ARY	SCHC	OL
Name of	Prop	ertv					

Lee Co., FL County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property

Less than one

UTM References

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)



Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)



11. Form Prepared By

name/title Steve Olausen, Historic Property Associates; Carl Shiver, Historic Sites Specialist							
organization Bureau of Historic Preservation	date March 1999						
street & number R.A. Gray Building, 500 S. Bronough Street	telephone <u>(850)</u> 487-2333						
city or town Tallahassee	Florida zip code 32399-0250						

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)						
name Lee County District School Board						
street & number 2055 Central Avenue			telephone	<u>(941)</u>	337-8311	
city or town Fort Myers	_ state	Florida	zip	code	33901	

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and amend listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number ____7 Page ___1

EDISON PARK SCHOOL FORT MYERS, LEE COUNTY, FLORIDA DESCRIPTION

SUMMARY

Edison Park Elementary School, constructed 1927, is a two-story, T-shaped Mediterranean Revival style building constructed of stuccoed hollow clay tile. It has a flat, builtup roof surrounded by a parapet decorated with a pent roof surfaced with clay tile and supported by carved brackets. The areas of clay tile are pierced by pillars that are extensions of the vertical wall bays that separate the major window and door bays. The major entrances to the building are defined by frontispieces that have shaped parapets and feature decorative elements executed in bas-relief. The major fenestration consists of a multi-light variety of double hung, wood sash windows. The building rests upon a poured concrete foundation. In 1958, a two-story, stuccoed, concrete block building was erected northwest of the original school and connected to it by a narrow, two-story corridor. The style of the building reflects, but does not imitate, the original structure. A noncontributing school building, constructed in 1992, is found immediately northeast of the historic school building. In 1991, the Edison Park Elementary School became a magnet school providing instruction in the arts for students in kindergarten through fifth grade.

SETTING

Edison Park Elementary School is located at 2401 Euclid Avenue (Photos 1-2) in a residential area south of downtown Fort Myers, Florida, a city of approximately 400,000 residents found in Southwest Florida near the mouth of the Caloosahatchee. The building occupies the approximate center of an irregularly-shaped city block and is flanked on the northeast by a non-contributing school building. The school property is bounded on the west and south by Euclid Avenue, on the north by Edison Avenue, and on the east by Cleveland Avenue (U.S. Highway 41). The school property is landscaped with several mature live oak and laurel trees and also features smaller oak and palm trees.

PRESENT AND ORIGINAL APPEARANCE

Exterior

Main (south) Facade

The main (south) facade of the school is divided into eleven major and minor bays separated by parapet risers (Photo 3). The central entrance bay (Photos 4-5) features a one-bay, recessed porch surrounded by a frontispiece richly decorated with classical style, terra-cotta

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EDISON PARK SCHOOL FORT MYERS, LEE COUNTY, FLORIDA DESCRIPTION

ornamentation executed in high and low relief. Set within the porch is a double-leaf, wood and glass door with a sixteen light transom that provides access to the building. The front of the porch bay features a narrow surrounds decorated with acanthus and anthemion motifs. The same motif is continued in the entablature with corner pedestals that separate the entrance from a pair of narrow second story windows flanked by pilasters that support an elaborately decorated terracotta arch. The frontispiece terminates in a curvilinear parapet that rises above the clay tile covered pent roof. The pent roof elements on either side of the central parapet shelter groups of five windows in the second story (Photo 6). The windows have decorative terra-cotta surrounds that include an acanthus cornice, foliated frieze, and fluted pilasters with ornate bases and capitals. The lower story windows in the bay immediately flanking the main entrance are unadorned and consist of single narrow windows flanked by paired double-hung sash window. The same fenestration arrangement is continued throughout the remaining bays of the main facade. The outer wings of the facade are identical and contain two single double-hung sash windows flanked by groups of five windows in each story (Photo 7).

East and West Elevations (East-West Section)

The side elevations of the east-west section building have the same configuration (Photos 8 and 9. A central shaped parapet is bracketed by pent tile-covered roofs that extend to corner parapet risers. A terra-cotta quatrefoil is centered on the parapet. The pair of second story windows are topped by transom lights. A terra-cotta entablature, similar to the one above the main entrance on the facade, is located between the windows and a recessed entrance. Rectangular panels with masonry sills flank the central bays in both stories.

North Elevation (East-West Section) (Photos 10-11)

The fenestration on the rear elevation of the wings is asymmetrical and consists of single, paired, and grouped windows in rectangular openings.

North Auditorium Extension (Photos 10-12)

A flat roof extension, which houses the school's auditorium, projects from the center of the rear elevation. The parapet of the auditorium contains a series of curvilinear parapets. Pent roofs extend to cover 8-light fixed clerestory windows. The ground floor windows of the auditorium are set in groups of three, each with its own three-light transom.

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EDISON PARK SCHOOL FORT MYERS, LEE COUNTY, FLORIDA DESCRIPTION

Exterior Alterations (Photo 13)

In 1958, a two-story, stuccoed, concrete block building was attached to the west wing of the 1927 structure by a two-story corridor. The style of the addition reflects, but does not imitate, the original structure.

Interior

The main entrance opens into a foyer, which leads to the main hall (Photo 14). North of the foyer are doors to the auditorium flanked by two sets of stairs leading to the second floor. The main hall (Photo 15) runs east to west and retains much of its original woodwork in the form of pine chair rails and baseboards. Sets of paired doors with transoms lead from the main block of the building to the wings.

The auditorium (Photos 16-17) retains many of its original characteristics. The floor of the auditorium slopes toward the stage area. The stage, which retains its original pine floor, has a semi-circular extension that projects toward the seating area. Its rectangular opening has a proscenium decorated with a floral pattern and a center crest. The windows of the room also have carved wood surrounds consisting of slender pilasters with simple capitals and attached carved crests. Elaborate metal rosettes hold the theater's globe lighting fixtures. The ground floor seats 340 persons and the balcony 116. To the rear of the stage is a narrow hall (Photo 18) that separates the original auditorium from a concrete block dressing room and storage addition that was constructed in 1958.

At the west end of the main hall on the first floor is a passage (Photo 19) that leads to the 1958 building. Only three of the classrooms (Photo 20) on the ground floor remain in their original configuration. Some of the original blackboards and wood moldings remain in those rooms. Additional sets of stairs (Photo 21), which retain their original balustrades and newel posts, are located at the east and west ends of the hall. Most of the interior spaces of the second floor are intact. The second floor hallway (Photo 22) resembles the one on the first floor, with the exception of a large open landing that is reached by the central stairs. The auditorium balcony is accessed through a pair of wood panel doors (Photo 23) on the north wall of the landing. There are six classrooms on the second floor (Photo 24).

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EDISON PARK SCHOOL FORT MYERS, LEE COUNTY, FLORIDA DESCRIPTION

Interior Alterations

In its original configuration the building contained seventeen classrooms, a library, two offices, an auditorium, and girls' and boys' restrooms on the first and second floors. In 1958, the classrooms at the northwest corner of both floors of the building were subdivided into offices, and halls were added to connect the original building with the two story corridor that leads to the northwest building (Photo 19). Administration offices were placed in the classroom space immediately east of the main entrance. Also in 1958, a small concrete block addition was constructed at the rear of the auditorium to provide storage space and girls' and boys' dressing rooms (Photo 18). In 1968, classrooms on the first and seconds floor were subdivided to create larger boys' and girls' restrooms. The interior of the building received a major renovation in 1992. All of the ceilings in the school have been lowered to provide space for electrical and air conditioning conduits.

NONCONTRIBUTING BUILDING

A two-story, noncontributing school building, constructed in 1992, is found immediately northeast of the historic school building. This building is not included within the historic property boundaries.

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EDISON PARK SCHOOL FORT MYERS, LEE COUNTY, FLORIDA SIGNIFICANCE

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SUMMARY

Edison Park Elementary School is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A and C at the local level in the area of architecture and education. Completed in 1927, the building is associated with a massive building campaign undertaken by the Lee County School Board in the 1920s to improve and consolidate school facilities throughout the county. It is an excellent example of Mediterranean Revival style architecture applied to a large public school building constructed in the city of Fort Myers, Florida during the land boom years of the mid 1920s. It contributes to the *Historic Resources of Lee County* multiple property group under historic context V, **Historic Development of the Lee County School System**, **1887-1950** and property type F.3 Educational Buildings.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In 1911 the City of Fort Myers took its first steps toward establishing modern educational facilities for its school age children by erecting a large brick schoolhouse, known as the Gwynne Institute, in the downtown area. The city grew steadily over the following decade and two additional schools were constructed. The pace of growth quickened as Fort Myers entered its most significant period of development during the Florida land boom years of the mid 1920s. By 1925 the school system had again become overcrowded. Gwynne Institute, which was then operating as an elementary school, was forced to implement double sessions to handle its large enrollment. With the need for a new school becoming acute, local school officials began to make plans for the erection of a new school that would augment the existing elementary school facilities.¹

Early in 1925 the Fort Myers school district petitioned the Lee County Board of Public Instruction for permission to issue bonds for new schools, part of which would be slated for the erection of a new elementary school in the city of Fort Myers.² Plans for the school were completed by local school architect L.N. Iredell in October 1925. Iredell's design called for the erection of a two-story Mediterranean Revival style building with seventeen classrooms, a library, and an auditorium capable of seating 500 people. In late January 1926, the J.M. Lawton

¹Donald O. Stone and Beth W. Carter, *The First 100 Years: Lee County Public Schools, 1887-1987* (Fort Myers, Florida: Department of Printing, The School Board of Lee County, 1987) 94, 123, 132.

²Lee County School Board, Minutes, January 22, 1925.

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EDISON PARK SCHOOL FORT MYERS, LEE COUNTY, FLORIDA SIGNIFICANCE

Company was awarded the contract for construction with a bid of \$149,500. The final cost of the school was later estimated at \$161,300.³

In March the Lee County Board of Public Instruction purchased an entire block of land in the largely undeveloped Edison Park Subdivision for \$65,000. The subdivision, owned by the New Homes Development Corporation, had yet to be formally opened. The property deeds carried a series of restrictions that governed the size, cost, and type of buildings that could be constructed and included a requirement that all houses have Mediterranean style designs. The sale of the land to the LBPI was contingent upon the New Homes Corporation's assurance that the surrounding streets would be paved with asphalt and sewer, water, and gas lines installed by January 1, 1927.⁴

The cornerstone of the building was laid at a ceremony held on May 13, 1926. All local schools were closed at noon to allow school children to take part in the festivities. The renowned inventor and long-time winter resident of Fort Myers, Thomas Alva Edison, and his wife, Mina, were present and participated in the dedication by planting a Cuban laurel tree that still stands on the property.⁵ The school officially opened in March 1927. It has been in continuous use as a school since that time. For a time, the school auditorium was the largest in Fort Myers and was used as a community center, hosting a wide variety of entertainment productions.⁶

At the time it was constructed, the Edison Park Elementary School embodied most modern concepts in primary and secondary education, as it was envisioned nationally in the 1920s. It was a central school plant that combined classrooms, a library, an auditorium, a nurse's office, and administrative offices in a well-lighted building that was designed for the education of

³Stone and Carter, *The First 100 Years*, 222; Lee County School Board, Minutes, January 26, 1926. ⁴Lee County School Board, Minutes, March 3, 1926.

⁵Stone and Carter, *The First 100 Years*, 223; "Edison Park School," historical marker placed by the Periwinkle Garden Club of Fort Myers, 1983.

⁶"Edison Park School," historical marker; The School District of Lee County, Florida, Facilities Department, "List of Construction Projects," typescript, n.d.

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EDISON PARK SCHOOL FORT MYERS, LEE COUNTY, FLORIDA SIGNIFICANCE

children of both sexes extending across a range of grades. It was constructed as part of the first concerted effort by the county's school districts to provide modern and safe educational facilities for their school age children. The building is also significant as an example of combining contemporary stylistic architectural concepts in educational facility design.

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EDISON PARK SCHOOL FORT MYERS, LEE COUNTY, FLORIDA BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Board, Prudy Taylor and Patricia Pope Bartlett. Lee County: A Pictorial History. Norfolk and Virginia Beach, Virginia: The Donning Company/Publishers, 1985.
- "Edison Park School." Historical marker placed by the Periwinkle Garden Club of Fort Myers, 1983.
- Florida Preservation Services. "Lee County Historic Sites Survey." Report prepared for the Lee County Planning Department, December, 1986.
- Fort Myers Press, September 11, 1926.
- Grismer, Karl H. The Story of Fort Myers. Fort Myers Beach, Florida: The Island Press Publishers, 1982. Facsimile reproduction of 1949 edition.

Lee County School Board. Minutes, 1925-1930.

- School District of Lee County, Florida, Facilities Department. "List of Construction Projects." Typescript, n.d.
- Stone, Donald O. and Beth W. Carter. The First 100 Years: Lee County Public Schools, 1887-1987. Fort Myers, Florida: Department of Printing, The School Board of Lee County, 1987.

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Section number 10 Page 1

EDISON PARK SCHOOL FORT MYERS, LEE COUNTY, FLORIDA GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the historic Edison Park Elementary School are that part of Block 25, Edison Park Subdivision in the city of Fort Myers enclosed by the boundary line shown on the site plan of the property included with the National Register nomination proposal.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries for the Edison Park Elementary School encompass all of the significant historic resources and the area immediately around them that were associated with the school during the period of significance from 1927 to 1949.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number Page 1

EDISON PARK SCHOOL FORT MYERS, LEE COUNTY, FLORIDA PHOTOGRAPH LIST

INVENTORY OF PHOTOGRAPHS

- 1. Edison Park Elementary School, 2401 Euclid Avenue
- 2. Fort Myers (Lee County), Florida
- 3. Stephen Olausen
- 4. November 1997
- 5. Historic Property Associates
- 6. Streetscape, Euclid Street, Looking Northeast
- 7. Photo 1 of 24

Numbers 1-5 are the same for the remaining photographs.

- 6. Streetscape, Euclid Avenue, Looking Northwest
- 7. Photo 2 of 24
- 6. Main (South) Facade, Looking Northwest
- 7. Photo 3 of 24
- 6. Main (South) Facade, Looking North
- 7. Photo 4 of 24
- 6. Main (South) Facade, Looking North
- 7. Photo 5 of 24
- 6. Second Story Window, Main (South) Facade, Looking North
- 7. Photo 6 of 24
- 6. West Wing, Main (South) Facade, Looking North
- 7. Photo 7 of 24
- 6. West Elevation, South Wing, Looking East
- 7. Photo 8 of 24
- 6. East Elevation of East Wing, Looking West
- 7. Photo 9 of 24

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EDISON PARK SCHOOL FORT MYERS, LEE COUNTY, FLORIDA PHOTOGRAPH LIST

- 6. West Elevation, Auditorium Wing and South Elevation, West Wing, Looking South
- 7. Photo 10 of 24
- 6. North Elevation of East Wing and East Elevation of Auditorium Wing, Looking South
- 7. Photo 11 of 24
- 6. East Elevation of Auditorium Wing, Looking West
- 7. Photo 12 of 24
- 6. Connector, 1958 Building, West Elevation, Looking East
- 7. Photo of 24
- 6. Interior, First Floor Foyer, Looking North Toward Auditorium and Stairs.
- 7. Photo 14 of 24
- 6. Interior, First Floor, Looking East From West Wing
- 7. Photo 15 of 24
- 6. Interior, Auditorium, Looking Northeast Toward Stage
- 7. Photo 16 of 24
- 6. Interior, Auditorium, Looking Southeast Toward Balcony and Main Entrance
- 7. Photo 17 of 24
- 6. Interior, Auditorium, Corridor Behind Stage, Looking East
- 7. Photo 18 of 24
- 6. Interior, Hallway Leading to 1958 Building, Looking North
- 7. Photo 19 of 24
- 6. Interior, First Floor Classroom, Looking Northwest
- 7. Photo 20 of 24
- 6. Interior, First Floor, Stairs in East Wing, Looking East
- 7. Photo 21 of 24

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EDISON PARK SCHOOL FORT MYERS, LEE COUNTY, FLORIDA PHOTOGRAPH LIST

- 6. Interior, Second Floor, Looking West from East Wing
- 7. Photo 22 of 24
- 6. Interior, Second Floor, Looking Northeast Toward Balcony Doors
- 7. Photo 23 of 24
- 6. Interior, Second Floor Classroom, Looking Northwest
- 7. Photo 24 of 24

Current Map







