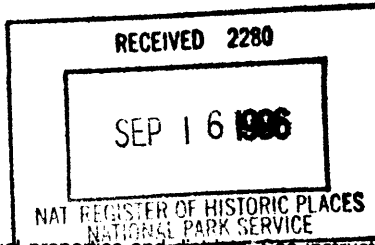


**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**



**National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name St. Martinville Elementary School

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Location**

street & number 303 Church Street N/A  not for publication

city or town St. Martinville N/A  vicinity

state Louisiana code LA county St. Martin code 099 zip code 70582

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Jon Fricker 9/13/96  
Signature of certifying official/Title Jonathan Fricker, Date  
Deputy SHPO, Dept of Culture, Recreation and Tourism  
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official/Title Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register  
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Edson H. Beall  
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action  
10-18-96

St. Martinville Elementary School  
Name of Property

St. Martin Parish, LA  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Education / school

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

vacant / not in use

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Classical Revival

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls brick

roof other: tar & gravel

other

**Narrative Description**

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

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

St. Martinville Elementary School, St. Martin Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 1

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The St. Martinville Elementary School (1922) is a large two story brick building with cast concrete trim located in an old residential section of town. To both sides and the rear are modern one story school buildings which house the parish's early learning center. Alterations to the historic school have been minimal.

The facade is articulated in a manner common for schools of the period, featuring projecting end pavilions and a central entrance section. The rear is marked by a two story section extending from the middle of the main building block. Although the entrance section projects forward only by a few inches, it is visually dominant, being framed by two story paneled Ionic pilasters and capped by a denticulated cornice and above that a shaped parapet. Within the shaped parapet are diamond and strapwork designs. Crowning the entrance door is a large cartouche with swirling vine-like designs to each side. The end pavilions have stepped parapets, although the shape is not very pronounced. Other noteworthy exterior features include nine over two windows grouped in bands, an encircling cornice, and a simple belt course above the second story windows.

The interior is typical in its floor plan. A long hall runs through each floor with large classrooms grouped off of it. The rear wing has two large classrooms on each floor. Details include simple staircases set within arched openings, plaster over lath walls, doors with transoms and five horizontal panels, and six light transom-like interior windows to provide ventilation.

Alterations since construction include the following:

- (1) The vacant building has suffered some deterioration, most notably the loss of the cornice on the western side elevation.
- (2) A covered walkway has been attached to each of the side elevations to provide access to adjacent buildings in the school complex.
- (3) The downstairs hallway is sheathed in fiberboard and the ceiling is covered with celotex tiles.
- (4) There are two instances of two classrooms being made into one.

CONTINUED

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

# **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

St. Martinville Elementary School, St. Martin Parish, LA  
Section number 7 Page 2

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Assessment of Integrity:

As can be seen from the foregoing, the St. Martinville Elementary School on the whole is well preserved, suffering only minor changes since its opening in 1922. Hence it easily conveys its significance in the history of public education in St. Martin Parish.

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 N/A

(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 more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) 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 #
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

education

Period of Significance

1922

Significant Dates

1922

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Architects: Nolan & Torre, New Orleans

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
Local government
University
Other

Name of repository:

St. Martinville Elementary School  
Name of Property

St. Martin Parish, LA  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreege of Property** less than an acre

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 

1	5	6	1	2	4	2	0	3	3	3	2	6	4	0
Zone			Easting					Northing						

3 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

See 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 Historic Preservation Staff  
organization Louisiana Historic Preservation Office date August 1996  
street & number 1051 N. 3rd Street, Room 402 telephone (504) 342-8160  
city or town Baton Rouge state LA zip code 70802

**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 St. Martin Parish School Board  
street & number P. O. Box 859 telephone 318-394-6261  
city or town St. Martinville state LA zip code 70582

**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 to amend existing 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.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

St. Martinville Elementary School], St. Martin Parish, LA  
Section number 8 Page 1

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The St. Martinville Elementary School is locally significant in the area of education because it represents an important development in the history of public education in St. Martin Parish. It and three other "modern brick" schools were constructed in 1922, a year one source referred to as "the inception of a new era" in education in St. Martin Parish. Of these four, only two remain, the candidate and a small one story brick building. And, indeed, these two schools are the only surviving historic school buildings in the parish. Finally, the St. Martinville Elementary School meant an advancement in public education within its community.

The development of public education in Louisiana is largely a phenomenon of the early twentieth century. At least it is during this period that remarkable progress was made. For much of the state's history private education was the order of the day. In the more heavily populated southern part of the state, education was dominated by the Roman Catholic Church. And even into this century there was a stigma attached to sending one's children to public schools, which were considered to be "pauper schools." Indeed, given the niggardly amount of attention and funding given to public education, the quality of instruction was generally poor. And the situation, of course, was at its worst in rural areas.

The turning point in the history of public education in Louisiana is generally regarded as the 1898 constitution, which provided comprehensive measures to address the matter. Among the most important was facilitating the ability of local authorities to levy special taxes for the construction and maintenance of schools. In the next few years school boards held special elections across the state to build much needed schools.

Like the rest of heavily Catholic southern Louisiana, St. Martin Parish had relied upon the church to educate its children. Little is documented about public schools in the parish prior to the early twentieth century. Apparently the first public school in St. Martinville, the parish seat, was built at the turn of the century. It is shown in old photographs as a long two story galleried building. It was replaced in 1910 with a relatively small (roughly 40' by 40') brick two story school. A two story brick school was also constructed in Breaux Bridge in that year. Other communities, all rather small, probably had one story frame schools, based upon what is known generally about the rest of the state.

CONTINUED

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

St. Martinville Elementary School, St. Martin Parish, LA  
Section number 8 Page 2

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What is regarded as a watershed in the development of public education in the parish is a school bond issue authorized by the electorate in November 1919 to provide for the construction of new schools. In referring to this as "the inception of a new era" in St. Martin Parish education, a 1950 source noted that it was "the first parish-wide school tax voted to add needed buildings for the consolidation of schools." In addition to school consolidation and the construction of new schools, 1922 marked the inauguration of public school transportation in the parish.

Bids for the construction of the four schools, one each in St. Martinville, Breaux Bridge, Cecilia and Parks, were received in early 1921. The work was awarded to Nolan and Torre, a New Orleans architectural firm, and construction was nearing completion at the end of the year. On December 24, 1921 the local newspaper boasted: "The Parish of St. Martin in 1922 will have the best school system and school buildings in Louisiana, with four new high schools, new up-to-date brick buildings[s] now nearing completion." (By way of explanation, the term high school had a different meaning than it does today. Schools called high schools typically educated children in all 12 grades.)

Although "high school" appears on the facade of the candidate, it appears that it has always been used as an elementary school. The above referenced 1910 school, which served all grades, had an enrollment of 326 in 1920 when plans for the new school were underway. The building must have been considerably crowded given its relatively small size. One suspects that the new school was designated the elementary school, and the old school served the secondary grades. The candidate is referred to as an elementary school as early as 1927 (per an article in the local paper), and senior citizens in the community know of it by no other name. Regardless of its name, the candidate must have been an advancement in public education in St. Martinville because grades 1 through 12 could now be divided between two buildings.

The 1910 St. Martinville High burned in late December 1927, and its replacement secondary school was demolished within the last year or so. As noted previously, the St. Martinville Elementary School is one of only two historic schools surviving in the parish, both of which were constructed as a result of the bond issue authorized in 1919. Now vacant, it is slated for renovation for use as the main building of the St. Martin Parish Early Learning Center. Due to life safety codes, children will only be allowed on the first floor. The second floor will be used for offices and other support facilities.



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

St. Martinville Elementary School, St. Martin Parish, LA

Section number  $\frac{9}{10}$  Page  $\frac{1}{1}$

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**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Sanborn Insurance Company Map, St. Martinville, 1927.

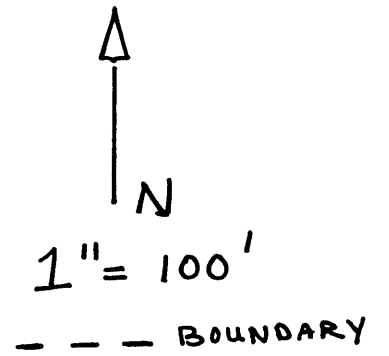
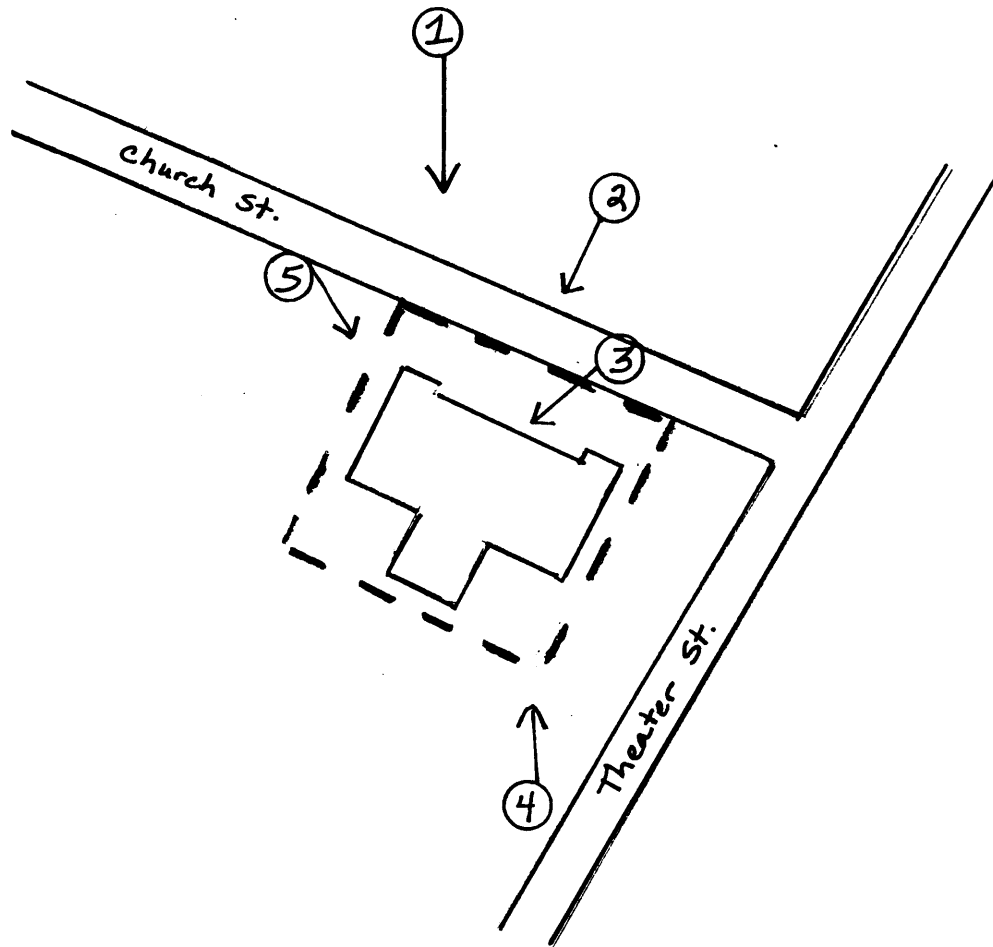
*The Weekly Messenger*, scattered issues in 1920 and 1921, copies in National Register file.  
December 31, 1927 issue for coverage of fire which destroyed 1910 building.

St. Martin Parish School Board Minutes, excerpts from 1920 and 1921. Copies in National Register file.

St. Martin Planning Board, *St. Martin Parish Resources and Facilities*, April 1950.

-----  
Boundary Description: Please refer to sketch map.

Justification: Boundaries were drawn tightly around the nominated resource because there are various non-contributing buildings nearby. As noted in Part 7, to the sides and rear are modern one story school buildings which house the parish's early learning center.



St. Martinville  
Elementary School  
St. Martin Parish, LA