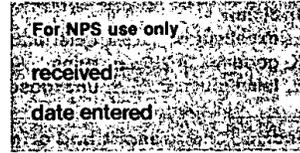


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form



See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Dade County Agricultural High School;
Miami Edison Senior High School (preferred)

and/or common Miami Edison Middle School

2. Location

street & number 6101 Northwest 2nd Avenue N/A not for publication

city, town Miami N/A vicinity of

state Florida code 12 county Dade code 025

3. Classification

| Category | Ownership | Status | Present Use |
|---|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> district | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied | <input type="checkbox"/> commercial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure | <input type="checkbox"/> both | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site | Public Acquisition | Accessible | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object | <input type="checkbox"/> in process | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted | <input type="checkbox"/> government |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial |
| | N/A | <input type="checkbox"/> no | <input type="checkbox"/> military |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> museum |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> park |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> private residence |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> religious |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> other: |

4. Owner of Property

name Dade County Board of Public Instruction

street & number 1410 Northeast 2nd Avenue

city, town Miami N/A vicinity of state Florida

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Dade County Courthouse

street & number 73 West Flagler Street

city, town Miami state Florida

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Dade County Historic Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1981 federal state county local

depository for survey records Division of Archives, History and Records Management

city, town Tallahassee state Florida

7. Description

| | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Condition | | Check one | Check one |
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered | <input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair | <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed | | |

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Miami Edison Senior High School consists of a complex of three historic buildings which include the school's main classroom, a gymnasium and an auditorium. The main classroom building (1928) is basically a masonry vernacular structure with some decorative elements suggestive of the Prairie style. The E-shaped building is distinguished by an open central courtyard and a prominent three-story pavilion marking its main entrance. The school's gymnasium (1930) is located immediately to the north of the classroom building. The building is a two-story masonry vernacular structure with a decorative program similar to that of the main classroom building. Located to the south of the classroom building is the school's auditorium. Constructed in 1931, the building is designed in the Moderne style and features a particularly fine interior with excellent modernistic decorative elements. The auditorium is joined to the main classroom building by a one-story hyphen. Also located on the property are three later non-historic buildings which include the school's band room, home economics department and shops. All of the historic buildings possess very good physical integrity although interior alterations, mainly to the classrooms, have been made. The school is located in a residential section in northeastern Miami.

Main Classroom Building

Constructed in 1928 following the design of local architect H. Hastings Mundy, the main classroom facility of the school is contained within a two and three-story, flat-roofed, reinforced concrete building. The E-shaped building has three wings which project to the east from its main (west) facade. The wings are two stories in height and one classroom wide. An open courtyard occupies the central portion of the middle wing. The courtyard includes an open stair at its west end which rises from a central stair and splits at right angles to the second floor (photo 4). Open galleries connect the classrooms of the building.

The main facade of the building is dominated by a three-story central pavilion. The pavilion consists of a rusticated base supporting large square columns and pilasters which rise to carry a low relief cornice embellished by decorative square tiles and stylized winged plaques. Decorative tilework also appears in the spandrels between the first and second and second and third stories of the pavilion. The historic name of the school appears within a rectangular panel set in the parapet of the pavilion. The main entrance to the building is recessed between the rusticated bases of the columns, as is the third story of the pavilion. The capitals of the pavilion's columns and pilasters are embellished by a triangular motif broken by horizontal bands. This element, combined with the longer horizontal banding of the building, gives the pavilion a reference to the Prairie style, although the building is in large part without stylistic reference (Photo #2)

The wings to the side of the central pavilion consist of four bays of grouped awning windows. Above the first story is an unadorned stucco beltcourse. A banded stucco cornice with square glazed tiles crowns the building. The north, south and east facades of the building repeat the form and detailing of this elevation. All of the fenestration is original although some of the windows have been enclosed with air conditioners.

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Gymnasium

The school's gymnasium building was constructed in 1930, probably following the design of Hastings Mundy. The two-story, reinforced concrete building is basically a vernacular structure with some very simple decorative elements. Unlike the flat-roofed, classroom building, the gymnasium is covered by a low-pitched jerkin head roof covered with asphalt shingles. The main (west) facade of the building is dominated by two entrances set in very prominent gabled porches. The porch roofs are supported by a pair of exaggerated consuls. The second story of the main facade consists of three bays of sliding panels trimmed with glazed square tiles. Above, a very simple cornice is supported by stylized modillions. The name "gymnasium" is spelled out in multi-colored glazed tiles flanked by three rosettes immediately beneath the cornice (Photo #6).

Auditorium

The most architecturally distinguished element of the school is its 1931 auditorium. Designed by Pfeiffer and Robertson, the reinforced concrete and stucco building is a stylistic departure from the rest of the school through its use of the Art Deco or Moderne style. The two-story, flat-roofed building is located immediately to the south of the classroom building. Its main (west) facade is five bays wide with three recessed entrances set in its central bays. The entrances are separated by stylized fluted pilasters which terminate in low relief stylized Ionic capitals. The doorways are set in segmental arched surrounds with stylized Ionic and rosette details carved in low relief concrete. Narrow recessed panels appear above the entrances. Still higher, triple awning windows set in plain surrounds occupy the three center bays. The center three bays of the building project slightly from the main mass of the structure and are flanked by large concrete pilasters which terminate in very stylized recessed decorative panels of floral and Ionic detailing (Photo #1).

The interior of the auditorium is a striking example of Art Deco design. The central focus of the auditorium is its large stage which includes an elaborate proscenium consisting of a multi-colored frieze of rosettes, Ionic scrolls and Corinthian-like designs set in low relief. A large stylized eagle occupies the central portion of the proscenium. The sides of the proscenium consist of reeded pilasters with stylized Ionic scrollwork, forming a capital-like detail (Photo #7).

The auditorium includes a balcony supported by square posts and stepped arches. The sides of the balcony are embellished by symmetrically placed panels containing an acanthus-like motif. The ceiling of the auditorium is supported by large segmental arches supported by stylized fluted columns with stylized Ionic or Corinthian capitals. The segmental arches consist of alternating stucco and decorative panels of design similar to the capital and shoulder themes (Photo #8).

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The ceiling of the auditorium consists of acoustical tiles with geometric design borders set between large beams which align with the columns. The original octagonal lighting fixtures are in place, as are similar fixtures beneath the balcony. The fixtures continue the modernistic design of the auditorium with their geometric banding and leaded glass. The original seating of the auditorium is in place, the end panels of which display a chevron motif.

Resources Inventory

Contributing Resources: 3 buildings

Classroom building (1928)

Gymnasium (1930)

Auditorium (1931)

Non-contributing Resources: 3 buildings

Band room

Home economics building

Shop building

4

8. Significance

| Period | Areas of Significance—Check and justify below | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> community planning | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> religion | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499 | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> law | <input type="checkbox"/> science | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599 | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> economics | <input type="checkbox"/> literature | <input type="checkbox"/> sculpture | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education | <input type="checkbox"/> military | <input type="checkbox"/> social/ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> music | <input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> theater | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900- | <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> invention | | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) | |

Specific dates 1928, 1930, 1931 **Builder/Architect** H. Hastings Mundy, George L. Pfeiffer,

and E. L. Robertson

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Miami Edison Senior High School, also known briefly as the Dade County Agricultural High School, is significant in the areas of architecture and education at the local level. Architecturally, the school is significant through its exceptionally fine Art Deco auditorium and through its response (in plan) to local climate conditions. Educational significance is demonstrated by the school's early vocational program of education, which included instruction in agriculture, boat building, business, construction, home economics, mechanical trades and secretarial skills, and through its many distinguished alumni.

The Miami Edison High School traces its origins to the Lemon City Elementary and High School. The brainchild of Dade County educator and superintendent Dr. John G. Dupuis, the school was built in 1915 following an extensive campaign lead by DuPuis to secure bonding and funding for the development of a school in the area of Miami west of the Florida East Coast Railroad right-of-way. Between 1913 and 1915, the Dade County School Board acquired twenty-five acres of land on both sides of the 6100 block of NW Second Avenue.¹ In 1917, the Florida Legislature passed a bill establishing the Dade County Agricultural High School at Lemon City.² This school was the first to qualify under the Smith-Hughes Act which was passed by Congress to encourage the development of manual training and agricultural schools, the precursor to vocational education. Qualification for the program made the school eligible for Federal financial support for its programs. The purpose of the school was to develop "manual training, agricultural and horticultural training and demonstration, including domestic science for girls, pertaining to practically all departments of home making and the maintenance thereof."³

In 1925, Dade County passed a major bonding program which resulted in the construction of several schools.⁴ In January 1927, H. Hastings Mundy was retained as architect to design a new school building which would serve as the Miami Dade Agricultural High School. Mundy was a well-known local architect who had designed the original high school in 1915. He was responsible for Trinity Episcopal Church, the first National Bank Addition, the Goodwill Building, the Miami Herald Building and Robert E. Lee Junior High School.

The design of the school represented a departure from the standard Mediterranean Revival style popular in South Florida at the time. The main (west) entrance of the school suggests the influence of the Prairie style, an architectural style rarely seen in South Florida. The building is also significant through its response to local climatic conditions. Throughout South Florida during the 1920's and 1930's, schools were repeatedly designed following U or E-shaped plans in which a single row of classrooms was connected by an open gallery or arcade. This plan allowed for complete ventilation, an important consideration in South Florida's subtropical climate. The main classroom building of the Miami Edison School reflects the influence of this

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type of plan and remains one of the least altered examples of such design in Miami.

The project was bid in May 1927 with W. P. Thurston of Richmond, Virginia proposing the lowest bid. Construction was begun in the same month and the building was completed sometime during the summer of 1928.⁶ A gymnasium building was completed to the north of the 1928 building in 1930.⁷ This building was very similar in design to the first building and was probably also a Mundy design. In 1930 the school board commissioned architects George L. Pfeiffer and E. L. Robertson to design an auditorium and cafeteria. George L. Pfeiffer was born in Germany in 1861 and came to Dade County in the 1890's. He was instrumental in the formation of the Florida Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. His work in Miami includes the Hahn Building, the Dade Federal Building and the Roosevelt Hotel. His associate, E. L. Robertson, came to Miami in 1919 after studying in New York City. Robertson designed at least one Mediterranean Revival building, the William Jennings Bryan Elementary School. He was also an accomplished designer of Art Deco buildings including Friedman's Bakery and the Sabra Restaurant, both in Miami Beach. It is most likely that Robertson was most responsible for this being the design of the school's auditorium, which is an excellent example of Art Deco design.

The school opened in September 1928 as the Miami Dade Agricultural High School with an enrollment of 892 students and 32 faculty. In addition to offering the standard academic subjects of English, mathematics and the social sciences, the school also offered vocational courses in building engineering, commerce, boat building and home economics. The vocational courses were taught at several locations outside of the main school building. To the west of NW Second Avenue was a building for the domestic science and economics classes. There was also a second building for the development of shop and manual training projects. In the Little River area, the school also maintained an experimental farm for agricultural training.⁹ The school taught students from all over the county and offered evening courses to adults.

The building engineering program offered courses in architecture, trade mathematics, estimating, trade science, trade law, and building regulations. All courses were taught by instructors trained in the building trades. One instructor, C. M. Davison, had studied for three years at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. Courses were also taught in carpentry, building operations and allied mechanical trades such as electrical and plumbing. The commercial program, the most popular in the school, provided business related training. Courses provided under this program included secretarial courses in typing, bookkeeping and shorthand and professional courses in general business principles, industrial geography, commercial law and business organization. The home economics program offered courses in the more domestic skills deemed most appropriate for girls. These included courses in cooking, sewing, child care, interior decoration and baking. The courses were taught in both the main building and in a large domestic school across NW Second Avenue. The program also maintained a rooming house for students who came long distances to study. Associated with the economics school was also an agricultural program taught at the Little River complex.¹⁰

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By far the most interesting program taught at the school was its boat building program. The 1932 school yearbook claimed that it was the only such program of its kind in the country. The program offered instruction in both boat design and construction. A local boatyard, the Fogal Boat Yards, furnished tools. Plans were provided by a Mr. Filer. Each student built one or two boats a year which would either be sold or contracted for construction, thus providing revenue for the continual support of the program and for the purchase of new materials.¹¹

In 1932, a campaign started among parents in the school system to rename the schools in the county on a more equitable basis. Pride for the existing name of the school, Miami Dade Agricultural High School, among some alumni and parents conflicted with the feelings of other parents who felt the name somehow implied that the school was inferior and less of an academic institution. The controversy came to a head in 1932 when the School Board considered a proposal to rename the high schools to North Senior High, South Senior High and West Senior High.¹² This was not acted on by the board at that time. During the week of Thomas Edison's death in October 1931, a surprise proposal was presented to the school board renaming the school the Miami Edison Senior High School. The suggestion was made by H. H. Filer who stated that it would be the first school named after Edison. Objections were raised by alumni and parents protesting the naming, but the school board adopted the proposed name.¹³

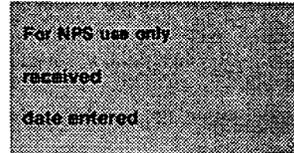
Since its opening, Miami Edison has contributed more than its share to state and local history through its alumni. Some of its more distinguished graduates include trucking executive James Ryder, founder of Ryder Truck Corporation, Judge Leah Simms, State Senator John Hill, school board member Bob Renick and former University of Florida and Miami Dolphin football player Nat Moore. Historians Arva Moore Parks and Dr. Thelma Peters were both graduated from the school. Other alumni include astronaut Ken Mattingly, Adele Graham, wife of Governor Bob Graham, and Judge James S. Rainwater, 1982 recipient of the Florida Crime Prevention Commission Award.¹⁴ The vocational influence of the school is reflected through its graduates who have become prominent in the areas of agriculture, business and construction. These include Henry A. Powell, head of Imagination Farms, Inc.; Edward Thornton, president of Atlantic Foundation Company, Inc.; John Toggweler, owner of a State Farm Insurance office and Charles Ermer, president of Right Way Plumbing Company, Inc.¹⁵

As with any school, its most important significance is to its graduates and the memories connected there. Miami Edison is definitely such a school. It has a very active alumni association, the Over the Hill Gang, who are committed to the preservation of the school and through whose interest and support this nomination was prepared. The school presently serves as the Miami Edison Middle School.

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FOOTNOTES

- ¹John G. DuPuis, History of Early Medicine, History of Early Public Schools and History of Early Agricultural Relations in Dade County, (Miami: Dr. John Gordon DuPuis, 1954), vi.
- ²Florida, Special Acts, Chapter 7669, Section No. 1, Page 799, (34:799).
- ³DuPuis, History of Early Medicine... Education, viii.
- ⁴Miami Herald, January 3, 1928.
- ⁵Manufacturer's and Industrial Record, January 27, 1927.
- ⁶Historic Preservation Division, From Wilderness to Metropolis (Miami: Metropolitan Dade County, 1982), n. p.
- ⁷Manufacturer's and Industrial Record, December 15, 1927. Miami Edison Senior High School, Seigga (Yearbook), (Miami: Miami Edison Senior High School, 1932) n. p.
- ⁸Historic Preservation Division, From Wilderness to Metropolis, n. p.
- ⁹DuPuis, History of Early Medicine... Education, 35-36.
- ¹⁰Miami Edison, Seiga, 1928, 1932, 1935, n. p.
- ¹¹Ibid., 1932, n. p.
- ¹²Miami Herald, October 1, 1931; DuPuis, History of Medicine... Education, 57-60.
- ¹³Miami Herald, October 21, 1931.
- ¹⁴Miami Edison High School "Over the Hill Gang" Reunion., (Miami: Miami Edison Over the Hill Gang. 1982.)
- ¹⁵Ibid.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

(See Continuation Sheet)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property Approx. 4

Quadrangle name Miami

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

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| Zone | | Easting | | | | Northing | | | | | | | | |

Verbal boundary description and justification

The block bounded on the West by NW Second Avenue, on the South by NW 60th Street, on the East by NW First Place, and on the North by NW 62nd Avenue. This area includes the three historic buildings associated with the Miami Edison High School.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Phillip Werndli; Michael Zimny/Historic Sites Specialist

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date April 1986

street & number The Capitol telephone (904) 487-2333

city or town Tallahassee state Florida

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Mary W. Ruff*

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 4/30/86

For NPS use only
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

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