

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name José Miguel Gallardo School

other names/site number Biblioteca José Miguel Gallardo

2. Location

street& number Paseo Escuté Final corner with Algarín Street

 N/A

not for publication

city or town Juncos

 X

vicinity

state Puerto Rico

code PR

county Juncos

code 077

zip code 00777

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this **X** 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 **X** meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national **X** **statewide** **local**

Carlos A. Rubio Cancela

Signature of certifying official

Date

State Historic Preservation Officer

Title

Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

other (explain:)

For Edison H. Beall
Signature of the Keeper

11-14-12
Date of Action

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	0	buildings
0	0	district
0	0	site
0	0	structure
0	0	object
1	0	Total

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

Early XXth Century Schools Puerto Rico, 1900- 1930

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/ School

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/ Library

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Mixed: Beaux Arts, Spanish Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: Concrete

walls: Concrete

roof: Concrete

other:

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

The *José M. Gallardo School*, located at the end of *Paseo Escuté*, corner of Algarín Street, in the Municipality of Juncos, Puerto Rico, is a C-shaped, two-story, reinforced concrete property built at the southern end of a sequence of institutional and educational facilities that lie four blocks west of the town's main plaza. Built on a 5.46 acres (22,000 square meters) lot, the ten-classroom school constitutes a noteworthy architectural example of a public program carried out during the early 20th century to erect school buildings in Puerto Rico. Archival information on the design and construction of the school is missing. However, its plans and elevations follow, with great precision, the construction documents prepared in 1926 by designer Francisco Gardón Vega for the Webster School in the town of Peñuelas. Repeated use of plans for educational facilities was not uncommon at that time, particularly at the Division of Public Buildings of Puerto Rico's Department of the Interior Office, where Gardón Vega worked. The designer's metaphorically "bilingual" adoption of the Beaux-Arts-derived vocabulary and the Spanish Revival style – as reflected at the *José M. Gallardo School* – was a common pursuit amongst architects of the period in and outside the Island. Although used as a public library since 1996, the property is well preserved and, while aging, it has succeeded in retaining architectural and historic integrity. Some of it has to do with its privileged urban location within town, as one of several foremost institutional buildings that are showcased one next to the other, *en enfilade*, along *Paseo Escuté*, a boulevard with no equal in formal character in Puerto Rico.

At the former *José M. Gallardo School*, the original distinguishing traits of the property are still in place. In spite of some changes, location and setting have improved the resource's appreciation throughout time. In addition, its volume and profile have not been altered with consequence. In excellent state of conservation, most original ornamentation still graces the school's facades and attests to local craftsmanship practices and workmanship methods. Turning a school that is almost one century old into a new public library has underscored the resource's architectural merit, reaffirming its urban relevance as a vital community resource, worthy of respect and admiration. Lodging renewed, well-attended facilities within the school described by townsfolk as "*the one everyone in Juncos went to*," has strengthened communal feeling for the property, and ultimately endowed the former *José M. Gallardo School* with associative powers that transcend different generations.

Narrative Description

The *José M. Gallardo School* lies on at the heart of town in *Barrio Pueblo*, at the Municipality of Juncos in the eastern central region of Puerto Rico.¹ The school enjoys a privileged urban location within town, as one of several foremost institutional buildings that are showcased one next to the other, *en enfilade*, along *Paseo Escuté*, a tree-lined boulevard with no equal in formal character in Puerto Rico.² In 1996, the school became the municipality's public library, retaining its name in honor of Dr. José M. Gallardo (1875-1976), former professor and Commissioner of Education.³ Erected in a lot embracing 5.46 acres (237,758 square feet) whose applicable land zoning classification nowadays pertains to SU (*Suelo Urbano*); its soil qualification being established as P (*Distrito de Conservación y Uso Público/Conservation and Public Use District*) by the Puerto Rico Planning Board. Site topography is primarily flat, in an area prone to moderate or minimal flooding.⁴ The building occupies a footprint of only 550 square meters within the larger tract of land originally provided to serve the school, but other buildings related to academic functions were built in it throughout the years.

The school's main façade looks onto *Paseo Escuté* to the east and its southern side lines up along *Algarín Street*, which runs east-west.⁵ (FIG 1) The *paseo* is a 230 meters-long boulevard running north/south, flanked on its western side by a monumental district comprised by several buildings of historic and cultural value to the town of Juncos. These are: the *Tomás Hernández School* (ca. 1915), now used as Town Hall; the *Escuela Celestino Benítez* (1924), currently a center for senior citizens; and the Old Municipal Hospital (dating from ca. 1880-1890), now lodging the local Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The *José M. Gallardo School* constitutes a fourth institutional presence along the street. The rhythmical disposition, formal bearing, and undisputable historic character of these four buildings contribute to make *Paseo Escuté* an amenable urban promenade, complemented by trees, lampposts, benches, and a center isle with greenery. While all institutions line up their building's volume against the *paseo*, the *José M. Gallardo School* is set back, creating a transition space beyond the sidewalk in an atrium-like manner. By "bringing in" the public realm within its lot, perceptually "erasing" lot lines, the resource claims an enhanced presence that contrasts with the other buildings *en enfilade*.

Directly cross the street from the former *Escuela Gallardo*, east of it and across the *paseo*, what used to be a residential block now incorporates within its original fabric, commercial establishments like a bakery, a beauty salon, law offices, a dental office and a small cafeteria. Most of these facilities serve the local population and, particularly, personnel and visitors from the adjoining institutions. South of the school, beyond an iron fence and *Algarín Street*, a vacant lot is used for parking. The *Fulgencio Piñero School*, dating from the 1970's, flanks the public library building on the west, behind it. North of the school lies the former *Tomás Hernández School* that, since 1984, houses Juncos' Town Hall. A small, L-shaped parking lot mediates between the Town Hall and the Library,

¹ Neighboring municipalities include: Gurabo, Carolina, and Canóvanas to the north; San Lorenzo and Las Piedras to the south; Gurabo and San Lorenzo to the west; and Las Piedras to the east.

² Formalized urbanistically as a *paseo* in 1983, the artery against which many institutional buildings line up has been the seat of public events for close to a century in Juncos. For the history of this public space, see Geraldine Pérez, *La paseata del Paseo Escuté; veleidades del urbanismo en Juncos, Puerto Rico*. Mid-Career Research Project, unpublished. School of Architecture, Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico, Fall 2011.

³ Appointed Commissioner of Education of Puerto Rico in 1937 and serving up to 1945, Gallardo endorsed bilingual education in the Island, emphasizing the progressive instruction of English over Spanish in schools, staged in intensity as students went from elementary grades to high school level.

⁴ School location categorized as ZONE X. Federal Emergency Management Agency Panel, 1235. Map 72000C1235J, November 18, 2009.

⁵ Francisco Escuté was the next to last Spanish mayor Juncos had by 1897.

including within it a single story outhouse used as kitchen and dining hall for the *Fulgencio Piñero School* (west of it), two electrical substations and a reserve water tank. The parking area belongs to the town hall lot, but it currently provides access to the back of library, to some parking spaces, and a service area. Several “Black Olive” trees - *Bucida buceras* - line the front of the former school along the Escuté Boulevard, their height surpassing the resource’s two-story height, thus providing an effective shade canopy along its front façade. **(FIG 2)** Concrete benches donated by the “Funeraria Miranda” in 1994 border the sidewalk in front, placed as they are parallel to the building and the street. The school’s building volume, C-shaped, is setback from the street seventeen feet at its ends. The resulting atrium space is paved over in concrete and 12” x 12”, red terracotta tiles.

The spatial sequence by which the resource is approached and experienced is a formal one, given the property’s unabashed symmetrical configuration and its perpendicular placement in relation to the *paseo*. Upon approaching the library from the sidewalk, the open area produced by the C-shaped building becomes a welcoming atrium. As an outdoor vestibule, the atrium adds poise to the school’s massing. Because the building is articulated along its eastern (main) façade in three tiers of receding volumes, movement past them endows the space with a processional quality. The north and south wings project forward towards the street; an entrance arcade recedes at center. Where each foreground wing and the withdrawing arcade meet, a slightly lower, two-story volume is located. The uppermost floor of each one is a later addition. A 15’-0” wide four-step stoop provides access from the atrium into the entrance arcade. A single, continuous, galvanized-steel, tubular handrail extends from the sidewalk to the stoop’s landing. At each side of the steps - and taking up considerable space within the atrium - two semi-circular ramps with concrete balustrade and banisters facilitate access to the library. As a result of the extensively paved areas and the inclusion of ramps, planting areas are limited, reduced to low planters behind the concrete balustrade.

Steps, ramp, and atrium all lead to the main entrance at the center arch of a group of five flat, Roman arches. **(FIG 3)** Most of the building’s fenestration is in solar-bronze, aluminum finish, and the main doors are no exception. These are double doors, French-style, with a semicircular glass transom. Left and right of the entrance arch, the adjoining ones incorporate comparable windows, casement-type and louvered, except that each is supported above a solid, concrete parapet and cap. Transoms above the windows are solid. Above the last two arches on either side, long neck downspouts collect roof water and lead it to the ground. At center of the east façade, over the entrance arch, surface-mounted, individual capital letters state now the library’s name: “BIBLIOTECA JOSE M. GALLARDO.” Echoing the five-arch articulation in the first floor, five rectangular, paneled columns appear lengthwise at a second floor galleria. Designed in post-and-lintel manner, they surmount the Roman arches below. The columns have a simple base, incorporating capital-like, bas-relief brackets with abacus and necking, of Renaissance derivation, a common feature of the Spanish Revival style (also called *Spanish Eclectic*).⁶ Above them, a concrete beam runs north-south. Wood boards hang from iron rods attached to the beam and the upper part of the columns. These seem to have been added to the galleria as partial protection from the rain. At this galleria, a solid, concrete balustrade with coping is topped by an ornamental iron grille handrail. Slightly protruding, said coping becomes a decorative cornice that “wraps around” the property. As such, it grants an illusory height to the first floor by “hiding” its floor slab height, and emphasizing a “high-waist” height, underneath the windowsill of the fenestration at the second story. The resulting overslung scale adds to the monumental bearing of the former José M. Gallardo School within the town, but also in respect to the other adjoining institutional buildings along Paseo Escuté.

⁶ McAlester Virginia & Lee, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984), 421.

At each of its ends, the upper floor galleria includes an open, Roman arch that leads into what used to be a small terrace, but now lodges a covered space, walled in concrete, in a rather rough textural finish whose contrast does not seem to have been intended. **(FIG 4)** On the northern side, the former terrace is now a storage room; on the south, an elevator has been provided to comply with ADA requirements not in effect when the school building was originally built. Devoid of any articulation or decoration, the volumes added on top of the terraces only include a louvered window in wood, identical in both cases. The lower part of these flanking volumes, in contrast, harbors much of the school's architectural ornamentation of Beaux-Arts derivation.

In detailing their corners, two paneled pilasters at 45% angle have been provided. These are capped at floor height by a small cornice. A larger one is located a few feet above. The location of the larger cornice coincides with the horizontal banding defined by the handrail of the upper floor galleria that surrounds the property. This is the height of the former terraces' original parapet, whose coping remains visible, even if walls now rise above it. Other elements further complement the volumes contiguous to the entrance stoop: an arch with an aluminum window faces the steps at ground floor, and a rectangular window looks towards the atrium. Above it, another rectangular window and a medallion line up at center. The decorative medallion grants further institutional emphasis. Both projecting volumes incorporate the same details.

The north and south wing also share similar features amongst them. A continuous pedestal and a receding molding above it define a base. Facing east on the bottom floor, two horizontal windows appear at center. Above the previously mentioned horizontal band that surrounds the building, each wing façade displays at center a single, rectangular window opening at second floor level. Due to placement, ornamentation, and repetition, these windows underline the overall symmetrical composition of the former school. At each windowsill, a cornice ledge projects forward at each ends, in turn being held by diminutive brackets. In between these, a rectangular, eared panel extends. It incorporates three paneled projections within: one square, the other two, rectangular. Spiral-patterned columns, candy-cane like, are supported by the twin brackets. The columns with capitals rise to hold an entablature in bas-relief, whose ends project outwards. As a whole, the different decorative motifs integrate an elaborate window surround. Atop the entablature's cornice, two torch-like finials rise to frame an escutcheon bordered by festoons, also in bas-relief manner. **(FIG 5)**

The different sculptural features contribute gracefulness to an otherwise restrained building mass, vertically articulated only by minimal recesses at each end of the north and south wings. A cornice coping and red, terracotta roof tiles - used as a subdued, crowning embellishment - cap these volumes and all others. Use of the roof tiles is most evident above the second floor galleria, lower in height than the rest of the building, but also slanted and lacking a parapet. A stepped parapet appears at center, but further back, not above the galleria, but on top of the roof, on axis with the rest of the building. In summation, the eastern façade of *Escuela José M. Gallardo* best illustrates the stylistic proclivities interwoven during the building's period of conception and construction. By simultaneously appropriating features from Beaux Arts and Spanish Revival styles, designers ended up recasting stylistic precepts, often diffusing the facts and fictions of a style, recurring to ornamentation without any prescribed, regulatory syntax.⁷

⁷ See Jorge Rigau, *Puerto Rico 1900: Turn-of-the-Century Architecture in the Caribbean (1890-1930)* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 1992; Chapter II: *On Being Modern in the Caribbean*), 41-106.

Upon comparison with the east facade, the property's north, south, and west elevations are straightforward, tending to purely practical considerations. Concentrating ornamental features (and funds) on the public face of institutional buildings was a widespread practice at the time of construction of the former José M. Gallardo School. That is why its lateral north and south elevations share a similar, flat, austere treatment. A small base is barely imperceptible due to the adjoining, sloping sidewalk. The surrounding band at second floor, windowsill level and the roof cornice crowned by red tiles, on the other hand, underline horizontality. The grouping of rectangular windows with little wall space in between also helps to accentuate the horizontal. Each five-window grouping originally corresponded to a single classroom space. Two floor-to-roof pilasters add a touch of verticality and indicate, in between, the location of the building's interior stairs. The pilasters hide roof drains within a rectangular enclosure. On the uppermost floor, an aluminum plate-glass window mediates between the roof drain pilasters. At the bottom floor, also in between the vertical elements, two rectangular windows reveal the location of the landing at the interior stair. Below them, two square windows ventilate and bring light into a storage area lodged under the stairs.

Along the west facade, the two floors are articulated into three vertical volumes: a central one, and two slightly protruding wings. Two floor-to-roof pilasters that, in shape and function echo similar elements on the north façade, further establish symmetry. On the ground floor, two Roman arches at either end of the main volume incorporate rectangular, aluminum doors. The arches' excess width and semicircular transom have been sealed off in cement block. These were accesses to enter or exit the school in the back. Ramps with tubular hand railings now lead to them. The horizontal banding runs uninterrupted, unlike the cornice coping with roof tiles that crowns most elevations, which is not provided at the center volume. Two pairs of three windows lie between the ground floor entrance arches; two sets of five windows are also symmetrically laid out in the second floor. Both protruding wings are blind at both levels, lacking any openings. Right on axis rises a mechanical vent, shielded by concrete.

The symmetrical arrangement evidenced on the outside of the former school is mirrored by the resource's interior spatial sequence. Approaching the building from the east - once past the atrium and the main entrance hallway - visitors reach the library's reception area. A hallway leads to the north and south wings, culminating in stairs at both ends. **(FIG 6)** On the second floor, the building's center volume incorporates tutoring space, storage, and a kitchenette. **(FIG 7)** Restrooms, offices, and a library reserve area are housed in the southern volume's first floor level. Offices of the municipal education department and related administrative spaces are lodged on the second floor. The library's circulation services and a children's reading room occupy the first floor of the north wing. Computer rooms are housed above them. In general, current functions circumscribe to the spaces previously used as classrooms and are defined by the original walls and circulation spaces.

The stairs at the end of the entrance arcade are built in concrete. Plain and wide, they feature a round post where the center balustrade ends at the bottom floor. Tubular iron railings have been added above the original concrete balustrade; others are bracketed to the wall, probably in an effort to comply with up-to-date ADA standards. Steps are finished in polished concrete and include stair nosings. Main hallways and classrooms are finished in hydraulic mosaic ("*losaisleña*"), a colored-cement tile much popular at the time of construction.⁸ **(FIG 8)** Application of the floor tile reflects the

⁸ Ibid., 155-58: "... at the turn of the century... Concrete tile (known as *losa isleña*, *losa nativa*, or *mosico hidráulico*) was also extremely popular. Variety in patterning and color made it possible to achieve personalized effects in floor design. Borders, friezes, and accents pieces were available from widely circulated catalogues. The most popular and sophisticated supplier of concrete tiles was *Escofet Tejera & Cía.* from Barcelona. Its products and designs (many by the

traditional patterning of the period by which tiles were customarily laid out to resemble a decorative rug placed above a neutral background. At the *José M. Gallardo*, a checkerboard pattern (white and wine) is bordered by an interlacing pattern of wine-colored X's, and edged by a wine-colored background that extends up to the adjoining walls. Walls are finished in smooth concrete. Wall bases are in concrete.

All spaces include acoustic tile ceilings and fluorescent lighting. Exposed electrical equipment and conduits, outdoor lighting fixtures, telephone lines (dead or in use), as well as plumbing and air conditioning pipes appear haphazardly in the school's facades. Some A/C condensing units are mounted on the ground, next to the building. A satellite dish has been installed above the roof, at a location barely visible from PaseoEscuté.

Proximity to the boulevard contributes significantly to the public's apperception of the architectural values inherent to the former José M. Gallardo School. As an urban *datum*, the *paseo* enhances the property's location, providing added value to its original setting, one far from being diminished by contemporary interventions.⁹ On the contrary, when experienced from the boulevard, the building's volumetric, freestanding, object-like qualities are enhanced. Retrofitting the resource's original use program has also ensured preservation of the property. A library is not that different from a school, if respective scales are comparable, as is the case here. That accounts for the fact that, to the general public, "*in becoming a library, the José Gallardo School has not changed a bit.*"¹⁰ Profile changes and alterations of distinctive features are negligible. Original ornamentation remains in place; its idiosyncratic nature reminds passersby of sophisticated craftsmanship practices and workmanship methods related to the use of concrete as a building material at a level of excellence that many consider unattainable and/or unaffordable today.

Turning a school that is almost one century old into a new public library has underscored the resource's architectural merit, reaffirming its urban relevance as a fundamental community resource, worthy of high esteem and awe. Lodging renewed, well-attended facilities within the school described by townsfolk as "*the one everyone in Juncos went to*",¹¹ has strengthened communal feeling for the property, and ultimately endowed the former *José M. Gallardo School* with associative powers that succeed in transcending different generations.

The Impact of Time

For over four decades, the José M. Gallardo School harbored elementary and intermediate (junior high) educational levels. Neighbors remember the property being abandoned for a few years before it was used as a cultural center for a short period of time around 1982 and reopened in 1996 as the *José M. Gallardo Public Library*.¹² Without construction documents to verify current conditions of the resource against its original components and characteristics, most changes acknowledged

most famous Catalanian architects of modernisme) were copied all over the Caribbean. Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Venezuela, and Mexico, among other countries, all produced concrete tile locally, but did not always succeed in matching the Escofet quality." For manufacturing details of hydraulic mosaic, see Jaume Rosell and Joan Ramon Rosell, *El mosaic hydraulic*(Barcelona: Collegi Oficial d'Aparelladors i d'Arquitectes Tècnics de Barcelona, 1985).

⁹ Geraldine Pérez in *La paseata del Paseo Escuté*, 3-4, explains the role played by the *paseo* as palimpsest of the history of Juncos, with "scars" to prove it.

¹⁰ Interview with Edgar Ramos, July 3, 2012.

¹¹ Interview with Daisy Lebrón, July 17, 2012.

¹²Oficina de Ordenación Territorial, Municipio de Juncos, *Declaración de Impacto Ambiental-Estratégica, Revisión Parcial del Plan de Ordenamiento Territorial de Juncos* (Julio de 2010) 26.

ahead have been accounted for through historic photographs. Undeniably, the plans designed by in 1926 by Francisco Gardón Vega for the Webster School in Peñuelas were followed in the construction of the *José M. Gallardo*. Nevertheless, one must concede – out of prudence - that in repeating projects, features and details could often vary or be suppressed from location to location. More so, if a few years lapsed between application of the original design and its repetition. To that effect, in identifying changes at the former José M. Gallardo School, no assumptions are made based on what the 1926 plans required, included, or may not have been provided.

The school's atrium has been subjected to the most substantial transformations. Originally, the space created by the C-shaped volume and flanked by the north and south wings included green areas, *parterre*-like, with a birdbath fountain at each side of the entrance axis, which in turn was highlighted by a concrete slab path.¹³ The fountains remained in place until 1983, when the municipality carried out a reconstruction project for *Paseo Escuté*.¹⁴ Under said initiative, the site was reduced by thirty feet to accommodate the *paseo* and a new, larger, circular fountain. It was provided on axis and at center of the atrium, substituting original elements, but respecting the formal nature of the original approach to the school.¹⁵ A subsequent makeover did not take into consideration the axial arrangement of the atrium that was integral to the school's composition. At some point in the 1990's, the diagonal pavement pattern in the sidewalk was used as a design reference to incorporate new entrance steps, an access ramp, and a low concrete wall with a commemorative plaque.¹⁶ The contrasting geometry of these more contemporary elements laid out at 45° angles failed to harmonize with the traditional, orthogonal bearing and disposition of the school. It proved, after all, to be a short-lived intervention, being demolished by 2004-06 to build the pair of curving ramps currently in place. Simultaneously, the atrium was covered with red terracotta tile and the shaped parapet was added to the roof, at center of the east elevation. By that time, when the property reopened as a library, it still had the two second-floor terraces that were later covered to house the elevator and a storage area. The terraces included flower planters along their periphery and decorative urns at the corner projecting into the atrium.¹⁷

Other changes relate to fenestration and small façade interventions. Original entrance openings at the west elevation have been partially blocked to fit the size and proportions of contemporary, metal doors. Concrete ramps have been incorporated to them. Most doors keep their original proportioning, but are in full metal. Ventilation transoms have been covered. All around the School, windows in solar bronze aluminum prevail. The original fenestration, in wood, has been substituted more than once. A few original door openings to circulation areas have been partially blocked, when needed, to reorganize internal circulation. Hydraulic mosaic floor tiles are in very good shape. In general, the resource is well maintained. Features added include: the wood panels with iron rods that hang from the upper floor galleria and the downspouts disguised as thin columns. At the upper galleria, original light fixtures have been substituted by chandelier imitations. All off the cuff

¹³ Photo of *Paseo Escuté*, in construction. *Anuario Fiestas de Pueblo Juncos*, 1993, no page.

¹⁴ *Escuté Street Reconstruction, Stage I Construction Drawings*, Municipality of Juncos, César Torres Torres, mayor, 1982; Architectural Affiliates, Wilfredo Rodríguez Torres, AIA, 1982, Set of 15 Drawings. Sheet A-2 Existing Facilities and Demolition Plan.

¹⁵ *Escuté Street Reconstruction, Stage I Construction Drawings*, Sheet A-4 Site Plan; Sheet A-5 Water Supply, Storm Sewer and Grading Plan; Sheet A-7 Landscaping Lay Out.

¹⁶ Photos attest to it: <http://travelandsports.com/espanol/paseo-escute-puerto-rico-pe777.php>; <http://juncos.net/foto/biobl.jpg>. However, the text of the plaque cannot be ascertained from the photos.

¹⁷ As seen in photos:

<http://www.skyscrapercity.com/showthread.php?s=677ccef9d95510ce4c32dc165bca29&p=13278130#post13278130>;
<http://www.panoramio.com/photo/23052729>

interventions can be retrieved and improved without harming the existing structure that, as it is, remains a prominent attribute in a town extolled by its surrounding setting. Design-wise, the former school remains true to its original massing and general profile. Original ornamentation has been preserved and, as such, exemplifies cast-concrete practices common during the period of construction. The overall strength of the design is such that, in spite of changing its use program, the property continues to project integrity and permanence, as well as promoting feeling of association from everyone who visits.

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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1940-1962

Significant Dates

1940

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Architect/Builder

Department of the Interior (Public Buildings)

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance of the property starts when the building was constructed 1940, and closes at the 50-year cut-off date (1962).

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary) N/A

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria)

The former *José M. Gallardo School* is significant statewide under *Criterion C* (Architecture). Its period of significance starts when the building was erected in 1940 and closes at the 50-year cut-off date (1962). As built, the *José M. Gallardo School* constitutes a prominent example of school models that are characteristic of early 20th-century, institutional architecture in Puerto Rico, exemplifying the shared endorsement of *Beaux Arts* and Spanish Revival styles as a legitimate architectural idiom. The building was designed by the Public Building Division of the Puerto Rico Department of the Interior. It has been used since the 1980s by the Municipality for other uses and it currently houses a public library. Moreover, the school is one of several historic buildings that line up along the *Paseo Escuté*, a boulevard that constitutes a unique urban feature in Juncos. Architectural merit and urban relevance grant the *José M. Gallardo* individual distinction.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance)

The earliest, 20th-century public school buildings in Puerto Rico were built between 1900 and 1930, during three decades. Much of it was work of architectural and urban importance. As such, it enabled many Puerto Ricans to become familiar with building criteria prevalent at that time in the United States. Many of the schools then erected throughout the Island embodied progressive concepts regarding architectural styles, compositional principles, climatic concerns, and building technology. Under the influence of related construction practices then prevalent in United States, but taking into account local conditions and possibilities, local designers and builders responsible for the schools built along the period demonstrated their capacity for site planning, typological interpretation, and stylistic manipulation. Three (3) identifiable phases characterized the three decades: the first from 1900 to 1910, the second from 1910 to 1920, and lastly, the third, from 1920 to 1930. As can be expected, some projects defy these chronological brackets, often heralding what is to come, or perpetuating ideas from previous periods. Having been erected in 1940, the former *José M. Gallardo School* constitutes an archetype of the last period.

In spite of the general building impetus with which the 20th century started, during the years before 1920, construction of school buildings in Puerto Rico followed a somewhat sluggish pace.¹⁸ Diverse causes account for it, among these: World War I; local political dissension and labor unrest, all of it having great brunt on a fast-paced social panorama. During the 1920's, however, sugar prices encouraged an economic boom that was shared by businesses and government. Most municipalities benefited from the improved fiscal conditions, directly or indirectly. Many set aside matching funds to

¹⁸ Ángela López Borrero, *Mi Escuelita: Educación y arquitectura en Puerto Rico*. (San Juan, Puerto Rico: Editorial Universidad de Puerto Rico, 2005), 141.

build up-to-date schools within their districts. In 1923, the local government committed one million dollars to complement municipal efforts.¹⁹ Monies were channelled to different localities through government debenture loans. Funds thus granted to qualified municipalities made viable the construction of hundreds of schools throughout the Island.²⁰

Construction of the *José M. Gallardo School* was probably made possible by this method of financial support, but lack of official documentation regarding the building's construction process impedes any categorical confirmation of it. Likewise, the property's architectural design replicates that of the *Webster School* in Peñuelas, its plan layout and details, but so far, research has not yielded any acknowledgement of it.²¹ Without specific archival information, construction documents, or correspondence, appreciation of the property rests on the explicit similarity with the Peñuelas model, designed by Francisco Gardón Vega (1891-1938), an architect then working for Puerto Rico's Department of the Interior, under the chief architect for the Department's Division of Public Buildings, Rafael Carmoega.²²

Most details specified by the designer for the Peñuelas school were incorporated in its counterpart in Juncos: pilasters, urns, escutcheons, focal windows, and others. Plans of the former, without doubt, were the blueprint for the latter, in spite of the chronological lacuna yet to be expounded regarding the specific date of construction of the *José M. Gallardo School*. Different resources provide different construction dates for the building, but in an aerial photo from 1937, no building appears yet on the lot.²³ Archival Research has turned up reference to the completion of the design of a 10-classroom school in Juncos in the 1938-1939 fiscal year (July 1938-June 1939).²⁴ Funded by Insular and PWA funds, this was most probably the *José M. Gallardo*, as there is no other comparable one in town from that time and the number of classrooms provided coincides. The total budget for the project was \$37,621.42.

¹⁹ See Teachers' College, Columbia University, *A Survey of the Public Educational System in Puerto Rico* (New York City, Bureau of Publications, 1926), 19-20: "At various times since 1900, the insular government has also appropriated sums for the erection of school buildings. The last considerable appropriation was in 1923, when one million dollars were set aside for this purpose. The increasing tendency has been, however, to place upon the municipalities... the burden of providing and maintaining schoolhouses."

²⁰ A *debenture loan* is "a type of debt instrument that is not secured by physical asset or collateral. Debentures are backed only by the general creditworthiness and reputation of the issuer. Both corporations and governments frequently issue this type of bond in order to secure capital. Like other types of bonds, debentures are documented in an indenture... Debentures have no collateral. Bond buyers generally purchase debentures based on the belief that the bond issuer is unlikely to default on the repayment. From: <http://www.investopedia.com/terms/d/debenture.asp#ixzz20j28RYu2>

²¹ AGPR, Fondo: Obras Públicas; Serie: Edificios Escolares; Caja: 1135; Legajo: 192, Exp. 1

²² From 1909 to 1912, Gardón Vega worked for the Department of the Interior as a draftsman. In 1915 he moved to New York. Upon returning to the Island in 1925, he goes back to the Division of Public Buildings of the Department of the Interior. In the next ten (10) years Gardón designed schools across different locations in Puerto Rico: the *José M. Gallardo High School* in Juncos from 1927, the *Andrés Flores López School* in Canóvanas from 1928, the *María Dávila Semidey School* in Patillas from 1929-30, the *Rafael Nicolau School* in Aguas Buenas and the *Escuela Eugenio María de Hostos* in Las Marías, both from 1930, and, as already stated, *Escuela Webster* in Peñuelas from 1926. In 1936, Gardón began to work for the *Puerto Rico Reconstruction Administration (PRRA)*, the agency who oversaw the discharge of *New Deal* measures on the Island. Like other early 20th century architects, Francisco Gardón Vega was eclectic in manner. His designs refused adherence to a single stylistic expression, combining ornamental features at will to express architecture as a polyvalent language.

²³ Aerialphoto: K-35/102. Juncos, 08 02 1937. Autoridad de Carreteras, Departamento de Transportación y Obras Públicas de Puerto Rico. Oficina de Sistemas de Información Geográfica.

²⁴ *Informe del Comisionado del Interior al Honorable Gobernador de Puerto Rico, Año Fiscal 1938-39*. (San Juan: Negociado de Materiales, Imprenta y Transportación, 1940), 40-41.

Not much more is known today about the school's extended life, except for the reduction of its eastern patio and related changes imposed to its atrium from 1983 to 2004. Regardless of the current impossibility of establishing the resource's date of construction or authorship with definite certainty, the former *José M. Gallardo School* stands on its own nonetheless as an important architectural icon whose character is underlined, in turn, by the integrity of *Paseo Escuté*. The adjoining boulevard has succeeded in enhancing its urban presence throughout the years, simultaneously revalidating the architectural identity of the buildings that line up against it, as the *José M. Gallardo* does. Thus, the school's importance within the town's urban texture is in chorus related to its individual merits, but also to its key role within a group of other similarly distinguished buildings that lend wholeness to the space. At two other Island locations – Arecibo and Mayagüez – historic schools were (and still are) similarly grouped along one axis, but no comparable urban gesture has been implemented there. In that sense, the former *José M. Gallardo School* is a distinctive resource enjoying (and contributing to) an exceptional location. •

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

9. Major Bibliographical References

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Edgar Ramos, former student, José M. Gallardo School, July 3, 2012.

Margarita Vélez, Director of Tourism and Culture, Municipality of Juncos, July 31, 2012

Figures

Eduardo Miranda, July 17, 2012

Architect Jorge Rigau, FAIA, March 10, 2012

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- 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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: Archivo de Arquitectura y Construcción de la Universidad de Puerto Rico

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre (0.13 acre)
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	<u>20</u> Zone	<u>190723</u> Easting	<u>2017883</u> Northing	3	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
2	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing	4	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

The boundaries are indicated on the accompanying base map, and are shown as the dotted line on the accompanying map. See continuation sheet, section 10.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The nominated property includes the entire lot historically associated with the José Miguel Gallardo School.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Arq. Jorge Rigau, FAIA
organization Jorge Rigau Arquitectos date August 13 , 2012
street& number #67 calle Los baños, 1er piso telephone (787) 982-0002
city or town San Juan state Puerto Rico zip code 00911
e-mail rigau@jorgerigau.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

1. **Jose M. Gallardo School**
2. **Juncos, Puerto Rico**
3. **Eduardo Miranda**
4. **July 17, 2012**
5. **Jorge Rigau Arquitectos, San Juan, Puerto Rico**
6. **East elevation, looking west. Front facade towards Escuté Boulevard. José M. Gallardo School is set back, creating a transition space beyond the sidewalk in an atrium-like manner.**

7. #1

1. Jose M. Gallardo School
 2. Juncos, Puerto Rico
 3. Eduardo Miranda
 4. July 17, 2012
 5. Jorge Rigau Arquitectos, San Juan, Puerto Rico
 6. East facade partial view, looking northwest. "Black Olive" trees - *Bucida buceras* - line the front of the former school along the Escuté Boulevard providing an effective shade canopy along its front façade.
 7. #2
-

1. Jose M. Gallardo School
 2. Juncos, Puerto Rico
 3. Eduardo Miranda
 4. July 17, 2012
 5. Jorge Rigau Arquitectos, San Juan, Puerto Rico
 6. East facade partial view, looking northwest. The open area produced by the C-shaped building becomes a welcoming atrium. Semi-circular ramps and four-step stoop are part of a recent renovation.
 7. #3
-

1. Jose M. Gallardo School
 2. Juncos, Puerto Rico
 3. Eduardo Miranda
 4. July 17, 2012
 5. Jorge Rigau Arquitectos, San Juan, Puerto Rico
 6. East facade partial view, looking west. A lower height two-story volume is located where each wing and the arcade meet. With two paneled pilasters and decorative medallions grants further institutional emphasis.
 7. #4
-

1. Jose M. Gallardo School
 2. Juncos, Puerto Rico
 3. Eduardo Miranda
 4. July 17, 2012
 5. Jorge Rigau Arquitectos, San Juan, Puerto Rico
 6. East facade partial view, looking west. A single, rectangular window opening at second floor level. Sculptural features contribute gracefulness to an otherwise restrained building mass.
 7. #5
 - 8.
-

1. Jose M. Gallardo School
2. Juncos, Puerto Rico
3. Architect Jorge Rigau, FAIA
4. March 10, 2012

5. **Jorge Rigau Arquitectos, San Juan, Puerto Rico**
 6. **Interior view, looking north. Entrance hallway on the ground level leads to the north and south wings, culminating in stairs at both ends.**
 7. **#6**
-

1. **Jose M. Gallardo School**
 2. **Juncos, Puerto Rico**
 3. **Eduardo Miranda**
 4. **July 17, 2012**
 5. **Jorge Rigau Arquitectos, San Juan, Puerto Rico**
 6. **Interior view, looking south. Second floor galleria leads to the north and south wings, culminating in stairs at both ends.**
 7. **#7**
-

1. **Jose M. Gallardo School**
2. **Juncos, Puerto Rico**
3. **Architect Jorge Rigau, FAIA**
4. **March 10, 2012**
5. **Jorge Rigau Arquitectos, San Juan, Puerto Rico**
6. **Floor corner detail, looking southeast. A checkerboard pattern (white and wine) is bordered by an interlacing pattern of wine-colored X's, and edged by wine-colored tiles.**
7. **#8**

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

other (explain:)

For Edison H. Beall
Signature of the Keeper

11-14-12
Date of Action

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	0	buildings
0	0	district
0	0	site
0	0	structure
0	0	object
1	0	Total

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

Early XXth Century Schools Puerto Rico, 1900- 1930

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/ School

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/ Library

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

José Miguel Gallardo School

Juncos, Puerto Rico

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)
Early XXth Century Schools Puerto Rico,
1900-1930

Section number 10 Page 19

10. Geographical Data

The boundaries are indicated with gray shading. Map shows the contributing resource. The limits were obtained from the official boundaries map provided by the Puerto Rico Planning Board.

JOSÉ MIGUEL GALLARDO SCHOOL, JUNCOS, PUERTO RICO

Location: Paseo Escuté Final corner with Algarin St Juncos, Puerto Rico 00777

UTM Reference: 20, 190723, 2017883

Acreage of Property: Less than one acre (0.13 acre)



JORGE RIGAU
ARQUITECTOS



- ◀ Contributing resource
- Property boundary

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

José Miguel Gallardo School

Juncos, Puerto Rico

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)
Early XXth Century Schools Puerto Rico,
1900-1930

Section number Additional Documentation Page 20

Additional Documentation Map

The limits of the plot were obtained from the official boundaries map provided by the Puerto Rico Planning Board. The boundaries of the nominated resource are identified by an outline. Image taken from Google Earth.

JOSÉ MIGUEL GALLARDO SCHOOL, JUNCOS, PUERTO RICO

Location: Paseo Escuté Final corner with Algarín St Juncos, Puerto Rico 00777
UTM Reference: 20, 190723, 2017883
Acreage of Property: Less than one acre (0.13 acre)

