

RECEIVED 2280

(Expires 5/31/2012)

940

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

SEP 28 2012

NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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 Daniel Webster Schoolother names/site number Escuela Daniel Webster; La Webster

2. Location

street& number 255 Luis Muñoz Rivera Street☐ N/A

not for publication

city or town Peñuelas☒ X

vicinity

state Puerto Ricocode PRcounty Peñuelascode 111zip code 00624

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

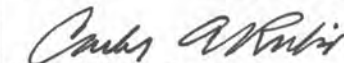
I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ☒ meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national

☒ statewide

local

Carlos A. Rubio Cancela
Signature of certifying officialSeptember 26, 2012

Date

State Historic Preservation Officer
TitlePuerto 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)

<input type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	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/ School

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 *Webster School*, located at 225 Muñoz Rivera Street in the Municipality of Peñuelas, Puerto Rico, is a two stories high, reinforced concrete building, erected at one of the main entrances of town, three longitudinal, urban blocks south of the town's plaza. Built in 1927 on a 8,108.4 squares meters, rectangular lot, the school originally had 10 classrooms. Four more were added in 1934. Rafael Carmoega was the architect of record, then being Chief Architect for the Division of Public Works of Puerto Rico's Department of the Interior Office. Carmoega is credited for many projects of the period, but for *La Webster*, construction documents acknowledge Puerto Rican Francisco Gardón Vega as designer. Gardón authored other important academic buildings in the Island, following the Neoclassical and Spanish Revival styles endorsed by other notable architects in the Island at that time. Presently, *La Webster* is in good preservation state and, as such, an example of architectural and historic integrity. The prominence of its location and setting still has a substantial bearing on the town's urban landscape. Profile and volumes of the property maintain their original definition. Applied ornament, most of it well kept, underscores the overall design at key surface locations, while also accentuating craftsmanship and workmanship methods pursuant to the period. Architectural integrity and the extended – up to the present - use of the property as a school, jointly elicit feeling and association from any one experiencing the building, its spaces, and immediate context.

Narrative Description

The *Daniel Webster School* is located at Peñuelas, a municipality in the southern coast of Puerto Rico, north of the Caribbean Sea, south of the town of Adjuntas, east of the town of Guayanilla, and west of the city of Ponce. With about 20,000 inhabitants, Peñuelas spreads over 12 wards, including *Peñuelas Pueblo*, the urban area of the municipality where *La Escuela Webster* stands. The school site faces Luis Muñoz Rivera Street to the east (#225), and lines up against B Street to the west. Private residences occupy land north of it, while *Baseball Park Mariano Quiñones*, for little leagues, lines up south of the school.¹ Its plot embraces 8,108.4 square meters, most predominantly flat, with flood zone designation "X", being as it is an area of moderate flood hazard, at

¹Puerto Rico Planning Board, *Geolocalizador*. Interactive Map of the Land Registry, <http://gis.jp.pr.gov/GeoLocalizador/Internet/> for plot number 363-015-028-02.

least from the main source of flooding in the locality.² The lot's zoning designation is *DT-G (Distrito Dotacional General)*.³

Dating from 1927, the Daniel Webster School lies in close proximity to the main *plaza* or square in Peñuelas, along with other adjoining properties that comprise an enclave with multiple academic buildings. **(FIG 1)** Within a footprint of 14,100 square feet, distributed between two floors, "*La Webster*" - as it is fondly referred to - totals twelve (12) classrooms. Its floor plan is shaped like an "H"; each *leg* of the letter houses three classrooms on the first and second story. The approach to the building is symmetrical, along an east/west axis. On the ground level, at center, are: an entrance arcade and, beyond it, a lobby shared by two administrative offices. The restrooms are located behind these, and can be reached from two lateral hallways that also lead to the classrooms. All hallways culminate on stairs. The main corridor, an arcade that runs north/south, connects the two opposite wings of the "H" across the front, and from it on either side, secondary corridors head west, leading to classrooms, restrooms, and additional stairs on each wing.

The school building is set back about sixty (60) feet from Luis Muñoz Rivera Street, and thus granted frontage with respect to the surrounding public space. A perforated concrete fence surrounds the lot, crowned with decorative iron grilles between repeating cement pillars. The northeastern end of the site has been subdivided into two areas. One houses an electrical substation, and the other parking spaces for faculty. A chain link fence surrounds both, except along Muñoz Rivera Street, where the concrete fence runs from one end of the lot to the other. Concrete pavement covers much of the space between Muñoz Rivera Street and the school. To the south, the distance between the building and the lot limit is very reduced, and a chain link fence defines property limits. West of the resource, the semi-enclosed area between the north and south wings includes both paved and non-paved areas. Other academic buildings, added throughout time to serve expansion needs, are lodged in this section of the site. Along the school's eastern side extends a concrete ramp that serves both the ground floor and the upper level.

The spatial sequence is formal, given the property's symmetrical composition and perpendicular alignment in relation to Luis Muñoz Rivera Street. Upon approaching the school from the sidewalk, the open area produced by setting back the building in the lot becomes an atrium where students and/or faculty gather when not in class. Concrete benches are scattered around, some placed on axis with the building. As an outdoor vestibule, the atrium adds presence to the school's massing, articulated along the eastern façade in three tiers of receding volumes. The north and south wings with classrooms project forward, closer to the street; the entrance arcade, in contrast, withdraws back. Between the two foreground planes and the background one, a single-story volume is located where each wing and the arcade meet. **(FIG 2)**

In the wall of the southern volume, a marble plaque credits in bas-relief the year of the school's construction and those responsible for it: Guillermo Esteves, Commissioner of the Interior; Juan B. Huyke, Commissioner of Education; Rafael Carmoega, Architect; Gabino Balasquide, Contractor; Juan G. Gelpí, Mayor of Peñuelas; and Lorenzo R. Purcell, School Director. In front of the plaque, in an extant, concrete volume, the old school bell and its supports have been preserved. On top of the volume, another plaque reads, in Spanish: "*Venerable bell of this school, that for many years called upon generations to fulfill the sacred duty of studying*". Southwest of the bell, mounted into a wall, several black granite plaques honor the sixty-nine (69) members of the Journalism Club, from 2000 to 2006.

²Federal Emergency Management Agency Map, Panel 1640J (Revised November 18, 2009)

³ Puerto Rico Planning Board, *Geolocalizador*.

A 21'-0" wide, six-step staircase provides access from the courtyard into the arcade. At each side of the steps, two rectangular, concrete bases support pitcher-like flowerpots ("*tinajas*"). A low planting area whose limits are defined by a 10" high concrete curb flanks each of these. Two iron flagpoles are bracketed to the wall, one at each end of the stair stoop. Two tubular iron railings articulate the steps into three areas that, respectively, lead to three flat arches that, in turn, constitute the school's main entrance. Left and right of these, two more arches complete the five-arch arcade facing east. The last two arches do not extend in full length to the floor; each has a concrete baluster, perforated by small squares and triangles, all capped by a slightly protruding handrail, in cement. These arches are repeated in identical manner in the one-story projecting volumes, echoing the H-shape of the building, and thus granting the school's arcade a wrap-around character at first floor level. **(FIG 3)** Similar to those arches with perforated, concrete balusters, these appear at the northern elevation of the southern, one-story volume, and at the southernmost façade of its equal, northern volume.

In the second floor, five rectangular columns, laid out lengthwise in post and lintel manner, surmount the parallel Roman arches on the first floor. **(FIG 4)** A solid balustrade in concrete, with flat, surrounding moldings, complements them and extends further as a parapet above the two, one-story projecting volumes. An ornamental iron grille railing extends over the concrete handrail along the arcade to where it projects outward above the single-floor volumes. Above these, the railings shield a small terrace defined by flower planters, and highlighted at the corner by a decorative urn. The corner is further articulated by incorporation of two pilasters at 45% angle; both are paneled and include small cornices. A medallion grants additional emphasis, as does a rectangular opening with a decorative iron grille. These details are similar at both, one-story projecting volumes, where the most evidently classical details of the building seem to concentrate. At the classroom wings, a pedestal molding and a horizontal band at floor level define the property's base; the same band is used in the second floor, but at baluster height instead.

Facing east - above the band, at center - and underlining the symmetrical composition - each wing façade (predominantly solid) displays a single, rectangular window opening at the second floor. At its sill, each opening includes a cornice ledge that projects forward at its ends, to be held by diminutive brackets. In between these, two rectangular, eared panels extend downward and project forward. The brackets support circular, spiral-patterned columns with capitels that, together with a bas-relief entablature whose ends also project outwards, integrate an elaborated window surround. On top of the entablature's cornice, two finials rise and frame an escutcheon bordered by festoons, also in bas-relief manner. The sculptural elements add a touch of delicacy to an otherwise sober mass, vertically articulated only by minimal recesses at each end of each wing. These rise two floors. On top of the ornate opening, two more horizontal bands (in concrete) run across horizontally. Between them, a small decorative vent adds further detail and reinforces symmetry within the façade. At each wing, contemporary lighting fixture, added for security reasons, sits on the school's uppermost cornice, one that runs the full perimeter of the H-shape. Between the first and second level, above the entrance arcade, and at center, the school's name - *Escuela Webster* - has been "carved into" the concrete in capital letters.

In contrast with the ornamental treatment of the school's main elevation, the other facades are unadorned and defined primarily by pragmatic needs. Compositional and fiscal emphasis on the more public face of institutional buildings was a common practice at the time of construction. At the Daniel Webster School, lateral north and south elevations share similar architectural treatments. They are flat and austere. Base, ledges, cornices, and fenestration emphasize horizontality. Low in each wall, iron grates for floor ventilation allow hot air to circulate. Windows appear in groups of five, each group corresponding to a single classroom. At their western extreme, lateral facades include only four sets

of windows for the classrooms here located. In total, north and south facades boast fourteen (14) classroom windows. Two smaller, yet still rectangular windows correspond to the stair shaft landing. On the north facade, the least visible elevation, an access ramp is located. Built five feet away from the building, the self-supporting ramp (in concrete, with tubular iron railings) only touches on the building at two points of connection. The lateral facades also include the floor and roof ventilation grilles that appear on the east elevation.

Escuela Webster's west elevation faces other school buildings on the plot. It is different from the others as a result of a school expansion dating from 1934. At that time, two classrooms were added to each preexisting classroom wing, granting the school its current H configuration in plan. Extending the already existing corridors at each original wing facilitated the inclusion of additional hallways and stairs, evident from the courtyard space in between. The addition - flanked by two longitudinal flower planters - dispenses with any classical ornament; hallways are in post and lintel configuration; proportions of openings vary and the original roofline is not respected. Railings of the added stairs are solid, blocking the view to the courtyard and adding a diagonal line that is foreign to the school's overall bearing. However, many horizontal lines prevail. An exterior ramp with an iron railing slopes down from the south to the north wing, in parallel to the facade. The north wing includes an aluminum roof to protect people from the rain when walking to other adjacent facilities. An iron gate controls the free use of the access ramp on the north facade. Next to it, low concrete walls define a garbage disposal area. The school's roof (and ceiling) is a flat, concrete slab, never visible from the ground, except at the west facade, where the 1934 addition extends out as a cantilever. Downspouts, distributed and visible along the property's periphery, bring water down from the roof.

The two sets of stairs, built at different times, exhibit different characteristics, in spite of being both built in concrete. The older ones (oriented north/south) have steps with nosings, and a round post as culmination of its center railing. The 1934 stairs are plain, wider, and an iron railing at center (added more recently). Railings at all stairs are non-ADA compliant. All classrooms have acoustic tile ceilings and fluorescent lighting. On the second floor, behind the hallway, two adjacent classrooms share folding doors that can be opened up to accommodate larger activities. The original plans called for these partitions, but these are not the original ones. Restrooms have been substantially refurbished, as can be expected. Ceramic tile covers floors and walls in wainscot manner. Ceilings are in acoustic tile.

All around the Webster School, windows are in aluminum, operable jalousie type. Original window openings have been partially blocked, when needed, to fit the size and proportions of the more contemporary, metal fenestration. Doors, however, keep their original proportioning, but are in full metal. Some doors retain their original, ventilation transom, but most have been temporarily blocked off to control air conditioning. All walls are finished in smooth concrete; floors are in polished concrete, but some have been paved over in ceramic tile and/or vinyl. Wall bases are in concrete. Some A/C condensing units are bracket mounted on the walls, or surface mounted, on the ground, next to the building. Cement stucco - original, but mostly pertaining to repairs - is coming off at some walls. Paint is peeling off, in most instances, due to the weight of one coat applied over another without use of any primer or without the removal of previous material. All of these improvised interventions and omissions can be removed and improved without any damage to the existing structure.

Impact of time

Built 85 years ago, the Daniel Webster School has served well its purpose as a public, educational facility. Committed to its original intent since then, it should not come up as a surprise that, in promoting personal transformation for such a long time within its walls, the building has also been subjected to effects of change. However, never having been forced to harbor any program foreign to Academia, it has succeeded in preserving its character and preeminence in the town. Spontaneous additions, makeshift repairs, and inconsistent up keeping policies have not deprived the property of its integrity. A veritable social fulcrum for Peñuelas, *La Webster* still ignites noble feelings within its many alumni who, to this day, continue to recall and celebrate its architecture as memorable, its urban presence as arresting, and the decades-long dedication of its faculty as a solid foundation for the development of citizenship among townsfolk.

Throughout decades, fundamental changes have included the elimination of wood components within the building: floors, roof and mostly, fenestration. Originally, the school was raised on 10" x 10" concrete piers, holding 2" x 18" wooden girders. Floors are now in concrete. Molded reinforced concrete was originally used only over the main hallway area; roofs over classrooms were erected in wood rafters and joists sized 2" x 6" and 2" x 8". Corrugated galvanized iron sheets covered the wooden elements, sealed as they were with flashing and counter flashing. Ceilings were in "*tabloncillo*", a local wood installed in tongue-and-groove assembly ("*machihembrado*"). The concrete slab roof brought with it use of acoustic tile systems at classroom ceilings and offices. Several ceiling panels are damaged by water and mold. Illumination devices are now fluorescent, instead of incandescent. The electrical and plumbing systems have been subjected to countless improvements, visibly scarring the building's elevations. Additional, minor surface damage and poor paint jobs do not detract from the school's general appearance.

The 1934 addition along the west façade adheres to the original composition in terms of its symmetrical lay out, axial disposition, prevailing scale, and, ornamental restraint. To that effect, instead of defying the existing, it strengthens the designer's originally formal treatment of the property. Another important change took place at the second floor galleria facing Luis Muñoz Rivera Street. Originally, a wooden roof protected this hallway with terracotta tiles on top. The rectangular columns along the façade included depressed panels and flat capitals, all of them supporting a wooden beam running north/south. These elements, no longer there, imbued the school with a Spanish Revival flavor characteristic of other buildings built at the time in Puerto Rico and, in particular, by the designer of *La Webster*, Francisco Gardón Vega. The decorative iron grills in the volumes flanking the school's entrance are also characteristic of the Spanish Revival. At the second floor gallery, upon removing the wooden beam, proportions of the seven openings have been somewhat altered. In addition, only a portion of the depressed paneling has been flattened out, leaving exposed part of the original bas-relief effect.

Minor alterations include: air conditioning units protruding from windows and walls; security iron grills at windows and within hallways; a free standing sign with the school's name at the entrance atrium; an electrical substation; multiple ramps; floors refinished in ceramic tile and vinyl; coarse flower planters; damaged cornices and moldings; as well as chain link fences. The wooden, foldable doors that originally granted flexibility of size to two classrooms in the upper level are gone, substituted instead by plain, practical ones devoid of any specialized cabinetry features. These doors opened up to create an extended assembly area. Assemblies, performances, and other activities were held here. Other schools dating from the same time incorporated comparable architectural

devices for flexibility.⁴ On each original stair shaft, at second floor level, construction plans called for a fixed, perforated window measuring 2'-8" wide and 5'-6" high. Multiple orthogonal openings within it allowed air to flow into the staircase.⁵

In its current state, the Daniel Webster School has successfully weathered time and several trite transformations. Volumetrically unfazed by the 1934 addition, it constitutes a dignified representative of early 20th-century institutional architecture in Puerto Rico. The property's unchanged location underscores the urban primacy awarded to school buildings of the period. Changes within the surrounding context have not diminished the school's setting, partly responsible for its long-established urban preeminence in town. To this day, architecturally well preserved in terms of both composition and ornamentation, the property attests to its period of construction's commitment to particular building typologies (in form and plan), formal spatial sequences, structural systems in concrete, and preferred stylistic nuances. It's all there at *Escuela Webster*, where authentic materials and workmanship demonstrate the aesthetic principles of the period, revealing in parallel, technological and decorative practices and principles. Throughout the town's development the school's façade and bearing has remained relatively unchanged, while its prestige amongst alumni and citizens has increased, all of it succeeding at evoking a historic and aesthetic sense of past periods of time. Extant significant physical characteristics convey the property's historic qualities. Continued use and all of the above conditions combine to convey integrity of association.

⁴ See the *Rafael Balseiro Maceira School* in Barceloneta; the *Eugenio María de Hostos School* at Las Marías; and the *María Dávila Semidey School* in Patillas.

⁵ AGPR, Fondo: Obras Públicas; Serie Edificios Escolares, Caja 1135, Legajo: 192, Exp. 1. Construction Documents for Project No. 1568, dated 3/6/26. Original plans and specifications for the *Webster School*, including related official correspondence, are preserved at *Archivo General de Puerto Rico* in San Juan.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1927-1962

Significant Dates

1927

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Gardón Vega, Francisco

Carmoega, Rafael

Balasquide, Gabino

Period of Significance (justification)

The property's period of significance initiates when the building was built in 1927 and closes at the 50 year cutoff 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 *Webster School* is significant statewide under *Criterion C* (Architecture). Because of its design, *Escuela Webster* exemplifies the joint adoption (if not always academically accurate) of *Beaux Arts* and Spanish Revival styles as a legitimate architectural idiom. Two key figures were responsible for the school's origin and bearing: Francisco Gardón Vega and Rafael Carmoega. The latter was the project's architect of record. Gardón Vega designed it. A third figure of local importance, Gabino Balasquide, was the builder. The property's period of significance initiates when the building was built in 1927 and closes at the 50 year cutoff date (1962). All things considered, while the *Webster School* typifies school models of the early 20th century, it also stands for the weight of a designer's idiosyncrasy in establishing the particular architectural identity of a building.

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

In the years preceding 1920, not many school buildings were erected in Puerto Rico.⁶ The reasons for such slack were varied: World War I had ended recently; endorsement of the Jones Act spurred local political dissension; and the labor movement instilled renewed social concerns amongst the population. In contrast, the 20's would boost the economy through sugar trade. Private industry and government profited from improved financial and fiscal conditions. Municipalities shared the wealth by committing matching funds to build new schools within their districts. In 1923, the Government of Puerto Rico set aside one million dollars to assist their efforts.⁷ Facilitated by the Island's government, a debenture loan program made money viable to municipalities interested in building schools.⁸

⁶ Ángela López Borrero, *Mi Escuelita: Educación y arquitectura en Puerto Rico*. (San Juan, Puerto Rico: Editorial Universidad de Puerto Rico, 2005), 141.

⁷ 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."

⁸ 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>

Peñuelas had succeeded in erecting its first school shortly after the Spanish American War. By 1900-01, the United States' Department of the Interior provided funds for a one-story, two-classroom facility in wood. The school was named after Daniel Webster, leading American statesman and senator from Massachusetts during the period leading up to the Civil War.⁹ In 1912, the Insular Government added several classrooms, also in wood. Fourteen years later, in 1926, the original wooden property was demolished to make room for a two-story concrete building, and school facilities were relocated to the south of the site.¹⁰ The need to provide successive additional classroom space was not explained in terms of a boost in total population within the municipality, but instead in terms of increased enrollment in schools all over Puerto Rico throughout the period.¹¹

Career and contributions of the school's designer, Francisco Gardón Vega

The new school was originally designed by Francisco Gardón Vega, working at that time for Puerto Rico's Department of the Interior under the tutelage of Rafael Carmoega, Chief Architect of the agency's Division of Public Buildings. Under Carmoega's supervision, Gardón Vega produced several remarkable school projects.

Francisco Gardón Vega (1891-1938) worked as draftsman for the local Department of the Interior from 1909 to 1912. Afterwards, he moved to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, opting for a career in Architecture at the *Carnegie Institute of Technology*.¹² Without completing his professional studies, he chose to relocate in New York in 1915. There he worked for different architectural and engineering offices. Gardón enrolled at the *American School of Correspondence* and, in 1921, he obtained an architect's certificate.¹³ In 1925, he returned to Puerto Rico and rejoined the Public Buildings Division of the Department of the Interior as a draftsman.¹⁴ The following decade was very productive for Gardón, designing several schools for diverse locations throughout Puerto Rico. Those for which proof of his design authorship exist include: the *María Dávila Semidey School*, in Patillas (1929-30); *José M. Gallardo High School* in Juncos (1927); *Andrés Flores López School*, in Canóvanas, from 1928; the *Rafael Nicolau School*, in Aguas Buenas (1930), and *Escuela Eugenio María de Hostos*, in Las Marías, from 1930.¹⁵

Gardón worked for the Department of the Interior until 1936 when he was employed by the *Puerto Rico Reconstruction Administration (PRRA)*, the local agency entrusted with the implementation of *New Deal* initiatives on the Island. Other architects worked at the PRRA. They were in charge of

⁹ Daniel J. Webster (1782 -1852) gained prominence in the United States as an advocate of New England shipping interests. Webster's nationalistic bent, and his abilities as an orator, made him a famous and influential Whig leader. A prominent conservative, Webster championed for modernization in banking and industry.

¹⁰ AGPR, Construction Documents for Project No. 1568, dated 3/6/26.

¹¹ Census numbers as recorded for Peñuelas reflect minimal changes: 12,129 for 1900; 11,991 for 1910; 13,598 for 1920; 13,278 for 1930, 13,278. Source: <http://www.statoids.com/upr.html>. In contrast, chronologically comparable figures for school enrollment across the Island show an increase: 29,172 for 1899; 124,873 for 1910; 178,035 for 1920; and 221,189 for 1930. Sources: *Report of the Governor of Porto Rico, 1918. Table IX- Expenditures for educational purposes and per capita costs, years ending June, 1899 to 1918* (Washington Government Printing Office), 549. Also, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Education, Fiscal Year 1930-1931. Table XXI - Total enrollment by grades since 1912* (Department of Education, San Juan, P.R.), 129.

¹² Much of the biographical information on Francisco Gardón Vega here quoted was provided by the *Archivo de Arquitectura y Construcción de la Universidad de Puerto Rico*.

¹³ The American School of Correspondence, founded in 1897 is a distance education high school, pioneer in the field of home study in the United States.

¹⁴ The architect certificate awarded by the American School of Correspondence did not allow Gardón to obtain a license to practice Architecture, limiting him to sign plans only as a "designer", as in the case of *Escuela Webster* and the *María Dávila Semidey School* in Patillas.

¹⁵ Colación, Inc. *Inventario de Recursos Arquitectónicos de Puerto Rico, Early 20th Century Schools in Puerto Rico*. Oficina Estatal de Preservación Histórica, La Fortaleza (San Juan, Puerto Rico, 1987).

designing new buildings for the University of Puerto Rico in Río Piedras. At the *University Buildings Division* – as the effort was called – Gardón joined architects Augusto Plard, Rafael Hernández Romero, William Schimmelpfennig, and others who were already working there. The new job gave Gardón the opportunity to work in several projects for the quadrangle of the university: the *Agustín Stahl Building* (in collaboration with architect Joseph O'Kelly) and the Library (now known as the Registrar's Building; in another design partnership, but this time with Engineer José Font in 1935).

Nowadays, Francisco Gardón is credited primarily for the interior design work for the university theatre, which he did not see completed before his death (1937). He was also responsible for other theatre-related projects in Puerto Rico, among these: Santurce's *Teatro Martí* in 1933; Puerta de Tierra's *Cobian's Film Center* in 1935 (now demolished); Guayama's *Teatro Calimano* in 1937; and the renovation *Teatro La Perla* in Ponce in 1938), in association with architect Francisco Porrata Doria.¹⁶ In keeping with many designers of the early 20th century throughout the world, Francisco Gardón Vega was an eclectic designer, reluctant to subscribe to just one style, skillful instead in the manipulation of myriad architectural vocabularies.¹⁷ At the stage in his life when he undertook the design of the Webster School, Gardón was engaged in a transitional phase, characterized by the simultaneous inclusion of the neoclassical idiom and Spanish Revival vocabulary in his projects. *La Webster* attests to it.

Deftness at addressing diverse stylistic expressions was valued by the architecture profession at that time, and Gardón was only one amongst several contemporaries to exemplify the trend in Puerto Rico.¹⁸ Within such a wide-scoped approach to architecture as a polyvalent language, designers felt free to combine ornamental features at will, indifferent to fixed syntactic rules of composition when designing a facade. In Gardón's hands, classical elements become surface appliques, arranged with freedom, but conviction regarding the effect of ornament contrasted with plain surfaces. Puerto Rican historian María Luisa Moreno highlights the fact that colleagues of Gardón were impressed by his nimbleness at wall embellishment.¹⁹

Design and Construction of "La Webster"

Francisco Gardón's design for the *Webster School* at Patillas dates from 1926.²⁰ By March 23 of the same year, town mayor Juan G. Gelpí had approved the construction documents.²¹ The project was bid, and the only contractor to submit a proposal was Gabino Balasquide, in the amount of \$27,757.35.²² In spite of being the sole bidder, Balasquide was awarded the construction contract.²³ In

¹⁶ María Luisa Moreno, *La arquitectura de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, Recinto de Río Piedras*, (San Juan, Puerto Rico: Editorial de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, 2000), 95.

¹⁷ See Jorge Rigau, *Puerto Rico 1900*, Chapter II: On Being Modern in the Caribbean, where the subject is addressed at length.

¹⁸ See Archivo de Arquitectura y Construcción de la Universidad de Puerto Rico (AACUPR). *Pedro Méndez Mercado en su tiempo 1902-1990*. Catálogo exposición Museo de Arte de Ponce: Instituto Americano de Arquitectos, Capítulo de Puerto Rico s.f.; also, Enrique VivoniFarage. *Pedro de Castro y Besosa: Alarife de sueños* (San Juan, Puerto Rico: Archivo de Arquitectura y Construcción de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, 1999).

¹⁹ María Luisa Moreno, *La arquitectura de la Universidad de Puerto Rico*, 94-99.

²⁰ AGPR, Construction Documents for Project No. 1568, dated 3/6/26.

²¹ AGPR, Fondo Obras Públicas; Serie Edificios Escolares, Caja 1135, Legajo 192, Exp. 1. Letter from Mayor Juan G. Gelpí to the Commissioner of the Interior, dated March 23, 1926.

²² Gabino Balasquide Solla was born in Bayamón, Puerto Rico, in February 19, 1873 and passed away in Ponce, in June 18, 1969. His long life was fruitful. In the early 1890's, he worked as a mechanic for the Spanish Royal Army and the French Railroad Company in Puerto Rico. He arrived at Peñuelas in 1895 as Official of the Telegraph Corps to establish the system in the area. In 1896, Balasquide entered the Insular Police Force, working successively in diverse localities:

spite of apparently lacking any formal training in Engineering, Gabino Balasquide was granted numerous construction projects in the southern area. As a contractor, he was responsible for the first evangelical church in Peñuelas, a Greek temple emulation erected in 1908. Balasquide was also entrusted with rebuilding the town's catholic church, *Iglesia San José*, in 1929, after hurricane San Felipe devastated Puerto Rico one year before.²⁴

The Mayor of Peñuelas was actively involved in the development of the project, as documented by various communications along the process in which he advises, among other things, to reconsider the school's original placement on the site, and to change the depth and type of the proposed septic tank.²⁵ By July 26, 1927, the school had been finished and Rafael Carmoega requested from his superiors that a building inspector be named to look over the premises for provisional acceptance.²⁶ The man appointed to the task was Blas Silva, a designer with whom the Department of the Interior contracted the inspection of several other schools during this period.²⁷ By August 9, 1927, Silva had carried out a second inspection, reporting that only "*a few details remain pending*", pertaining to: the installation of cremone bolts; the proper location of restroom equipment; installation, urinals' location; and the correction of door swings.²⁸ On January 12, 1928, after extending the contract to build a fence (*verja*) around the site, and solving administrative minutiae still pending, Balasquide was informed that the Department of the Interior had accepted the school's completion.²⁹

The new building lodged ten classrooms, offices, and bathrooms. In the main patio, twelve (12) swings, basketball hoops, and a "giant stride", all in steel, were installed. Inside, traditional, wood baseboards and wall and ceiling moldings were provided. Wooden floors (of "*tabloncillo*") at classrooms were oiled; all wooden fenestration was stained. Doors were paneled, crowned with rectangular ventilation transoms. Paneled shutters complemented casement windows with glass

Peñuelas, Guayanilla, Sámana Grande, Adjuntas, and Vega Baja. He married a *peñolana*, Amelia Grana Rivera and fathered ten children. Most of them attended *Escuela Webster*. One of them, Dr. Lorenzo A. Balasquide Grana, wrote "*Compendio Intrahistórico de Peñuelas*", a history of his hometown. A born entrepreneur, Gabino owned a hydraulic mosaic factory, and a draper's shop. Accounts of Puerto Rico's National Guard make reference to Balasquide's dedication and rigor. "*Named by friends and townsfolk as 'Don Balasco' and 'Don Bala', he was hard of hearing, strict, but generous with the needy,*" mentions Gabino's granddaughter, Clara E. Balasquide Tossas, who has researched the family's genealogical tree and keeps a collection of related memorabilia and an early original resumé prepared by Balasquide himself in April 20, 1920.

²³ AGPR, Ibid. Memorandum to the Bid Board from architect Rafael Carmoega, of the Department of the Interior, dated June 22, 1926.

²⁴ *San José Church* at Peñuelas was designed by one of the most prolific architects of the period, Francisco Porrata Doria. Balasquide also built *Iglesia de La Merced*, another church by Porrata Doria in Ponce.

²⁵ AGPR, Ibid. Telegram and letter from Juan G. Gelpí to the Architect of the Department of the Interior; the former dated August 26, 1926; the latter from October 16 of the same year.

²⁶ AGPR, Ibid. Memorandum to the Commissioner of the Interior from architect Rafael Carmoega, dated July 26, 1927.

²⁷ Blas C. Silva Boucher, born in Hormigueros, Puerto Rico, studied engineering in Spain, and returned to the Island where, shortly afterwards, he established his own private engineering practice. Two of Silva's works are listed in the National Register of Historic Places: the Subirá Residence (from 1910), and the Font Ubides House (from 1913). In 1919, he designed and built the Salazar Candal House. All of them are in the city of Ponce. Silva was project inspector for the Luis Muñoz Rivera School in Lajas (1929), and the Walter McJones School in Villalba (1926). A collection of photos taken by the engineer during the construction of schools he inspected can be found at the *Archivo de Arquitectura y Construcción de la Universidad de Puerto Rico*.

²⁸ AGPR, Ibid. Report from Blas C. Silva, Resident Inspector, to the Architect of the Department of the Interior, dated August 9, 1927.

²⁹ AGPR, Ibid. Letter from the Sub Commissioner of the Department of the Interior to Gabino Balasquide. Although dated January 12, 1928, the letter states December 13, 1927 as the official acceptance date.

panes. The total construction cost reached \$ 31,546.86 paid with municipal funds.³⁰ The first school principal was Lorenzo R. Purcell, whose name appears in the marble plaque outside. After the construction of the new facilities, a wooden building still standing was used as a cafeteria, including a kitchen and a storage area. In 1930, the outbuilding was lost to a fire. Four years later, four classrooms were added to the main building on the east side, incorporating additional stairs and a hallway. The expansion, costing \$14,315, was carried out under School Principal Manuel Stella and then-Mayor Jesús Loyola Castellar.³¹ No historical document, among those consulted, accounts for the designer responsible for the 1934 addition or, for that matter, reasons for it. In fact, official documentation regarding subsequent transformations is also lacking, probably because these pertained to minor alterations or improvised solutions.

Throughout the 1930's, graduations and social and cultural events were held at *La Webster's* assembly room, whose foldable partitions allowed to accommodate different size audiences.³² By 1945, classes were offered at Webster School up to ninth grade only. Those wanting to continue studying had to enroll elsewhere, in neighboring towns with larger population concentrations like Yauco or Ponce. That year, assisted by the municipality and the Puerto Rico Department of Education, parents pushed to institute a high school within Peñuelas. A program to that effect started at *Escuela Webster*, using supporting facilities scattered throughout town. In 1948, Adolfo Grana, School Director, held the first 12th grade high school graduation ever. It proved to be a most auspicious time to provide such venue, with World War II veterans coming back home and enjoying educational benefits. A student enrolled at that time at *La Webster* recalls demobilized soldiers taking classes alongside regular students.

From mid-20th century to the present, the Webster School kept its architectural profile and character but, most importantly, it fulfilled its duty as locus of academic activities leading the education of a large segment of Peñuelas' citizenry. As such, it remains a strong, local item of nostalgia. Many locals are actively engaged in acknowledging the school's extended impact within the community, and for diverse reasons. Websites, blog spots, and more traditional venues are flooded with related reminiscences in which the background against it all happened plays a key mnemonic role.³³ First and foremost, teachers are fondly remembered, and constantly honored, more so than what is customary in other towns in Puerto Rico. At Peñuelas, not only senior citizens evoke their teachers from formative years. Making reference to them as "the cream" of pedagogues, and their "excellent", and "splendid" professional performance, multiple writings recall *Mr. Grana, Mr. Irizarry, Mr. Rodríguez, Miss Ferrer, Miss Jacobs, Miss Torres, Miss Nin*, and others. Use of the respective English honorifics was common along the first half of the 20-th century in the Island, harking back to the years when many visiting instructors came from the United States, and when most courses were taught in English in Puerto Rico. By 1977, on occasion of celebrating the 50th anniversary of the school, alumni were still making manifest their gratitude to the many dedicated teachers that worked at *Escuela Webster*. The old school bell – no longer functioning, but still preserved in the school's front patio – elicits nostalgia from many: "... *the bell was heard at neighboring localities. Its sound was integral to our town's life and ourselves*"³⁴

³⁰ AGPR, Ibid. Liquidation contract made by Juan G. Gelpí, Mayor, and Gabino Balasquide, Contractor, and approved by the Commissioners of the Interior and Education on August 19, 1926.

³¹ *Nuestra Alma Mater*, <http://www.peñuelasonline.com/portal/>

³² *El Mundo Newspaper*, July 3, 1938, p. 4.

³³ Many of these are quoted in this nomination.

³⁴ *Nuestra Alma Mater*.

Also, the first basketball court of Peñuelas was built in the Webster School in the early 1930's. The sport had been introduced in the municipality at end of the 1920's, using tree trunks to attach makeshift rings. With the construction of the basketball court at *Escuela Webster*, the sport spread throughout the municipality.³⁵ Local pride is also elicited from crediting the Webster's contractor, Gabino Balasquide, for introducing many innovations in Peñuelas: bringing electrical power, water, and the telegraph; also building roads, churches and schools.³⁶

For all of the above, the Webster School remains an emblematic constituent of the history of Peñuelas, more so than church or city hall can claim in town. The Catholic church facing the main plaza is small-sized, unimposing, and comparatively delicate in decoration. City Hall's two stories have been refurbished; its postmodern façade is ambiguously symmetrical; columns and windows are oddly proportioned, all of it granting the building artificiality, and detracting from its institutional role. In contrast, to this day, *La Webster's* extant physical characteristics illustrate significant aspects of the property's historic period. The school building still claims presence and precedence in Peñuelas' main artery, permanently welcoming visitors.³⁷ Key architectural qualities contribute to underline the resource's significance, mainly: frontage; volumetric disposition and proportioning; the formal lay out in plan (preserved in spite of the 1934 addition); spatial progression from exterior to interior and within; fenestration patterns; ornament preserved and still contrasted against plain surfaces; as well as the integration of Beaux Arts and Spanish Revival features. At a school that still fulfills its original function, all these qualities help foster feeling and association, and grant it with strong integrity to communicate the period when it attained significance and its importance to citizenry.

Developmental history/additional historic context information(if appropriate)

³⁵ Wilmer Estrada Cruz. *Los primeros pasos en el deporte*.

http://www.penuelasonline.com/portal/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=322&Itemid=267. See also, *El Mundo* Newspaper: July 28, 1938, p. 12.

³⁶ <http://penuelas-puertorico.blogspot.com/2009/09/escuela-webster.html>. Balasquide is credited for "making" the town of Peñuelas: "*hizocasi el pueblo de Peñuelas*". Not only did he introduce the telegraph, but also brought electric lighting, a public transportation system and the first telephone, and owned the first car, the first ice plant, and the first movie house, which he built and operated next to the main plaza. Gabino was instrumental in setting up the National Guard of Peñuelas in 1909. During World War I, he was Acting Captain of the Peñuelas' Home Guard and recruit instructor. Balasquide was also Chairman of the *Four Minutes Men* in Peñuelas, a volunteer group officially endorsed by the US President Woodrow Wilson, to give four-minute speeches on war-related topics throughout the nation, granting war propaganda a local voice and contributing to public morale. Speeches were presented to the public in movie theaters across the country during the four minutes between reel changing. Well-known, esteemed community figures often volunteered for the program. Being a respected figure, interested as he was in all-things military – and owner of the town's movie house – Balasquide's involvement in the *Four Minutes Men Program* comes up as no surprise. In 1917 he presided the local chapter of the Red Cross and was a member of the American Defense Society. In 1915 and 1916 he was interim Mayor at Peñuelas. In 1920, he presided the Municipal Assembly and the School Board. See also, *El Mundo*, July 11, 1938, p. 4. Balasquide is mentioned amongst those present at an eighth grade graduation and bestowing presents to students.

³⁷ In 1934, Franklin Delano Roosevelt visited Puerto Rico. Docking at Mayagüez, he later traveled by car to Ponce. On his way, he went by Peñuelas, as mentioned by *El Mundo* Newspaper, July 11, 1938. The *Franklin Delano Roosevelt Day by Day Project* of the Pare Lorentz Center for the FDR Presidential Library acknowledges the trip and the visit to Ponce, but makes no specific reference to Peñuelas. (<http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/daybyday/daylog/july-6th-1934/>) With Muñoz Rivera Street being the main artery in town, upon visiting Peñuelas FDR could have gone by the *Webster School* and notice it, in light of its name honoring a well-known figure from the United States.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form)

Primary Sources

AGPR, Fondo: Obras Públicas; Serie: Edificios Escolares

Caja: 1135; Legajo: 192, Exp. 1.

Federal Emergency Management Agency Panel 1640J (Revised November 18, 2009).

Clara E. Balasquide Tossas Document Collection

Secondary Sources

Annual Report of the Commissioner of Education, Fiscal Year 1930-1931. Department of Education San Juan, P.R., 1931

Archivo de Arquitectura y Construcción de la Universidad de Puerto Rico (AACUPR). *Pedro Méndez Mercado en su tiempo 1902-1990*. Catálogo exposición Museo de Arte de Ponce: Instituto Americano de Arquitectos, Capítulo de Puerto Rico s.f.

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

Moreno, María Luisa. *La Arquitectura de la Universidad de Puerto Rico: Recinto de Río Piedras*. (San Juan, Puerto Rico. Editorial de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, 2000)

Colación, Inc. *Inventario de Recursos Arquitectónicos de Puerto Rico, Early 20th Century Schools in Puerto Rico*. Oficina Estatal de Preservación Histórica, La Fortaleza, San Juan Puerto Rico, 1987.

Report of the Governor of Porto Rico, 1918, Washington Government Printing Office, 1918

Rigau, Jorge. *Puerto Rico 1900: Turn-of-the-century Architecture in the Caribbean* (New York: Rizzoli, 1992).

Teachers' College, Columbia University, *A Survey of the Public Educational System in Puerto Rico* (New York City, Bureau of Publications, 1926).

VivoniFarage, Enrique. *Alarife de sueños: Pedro Adolfo de Castro y Besosa*. (San Juan, Puerto Rico: AACUPR, 1999).

Figures

AGPR, Fondo Obras Públicas Album, # 307

Miguel Ortiz, AIT, April 30, 2012

Internet

<http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/daybyday/daylog/july-6th-1934/>

<http://gis.jp.pr.gov/GeoLocalizador/Internet/>

Puerto Rico Planning Board,: Interactive Map of the Land Registry, for plot number - 363-015-028-02.

<http://www.penuelasonline.com/portal/>

http://www.penuelasonline.com/portal/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=322&Itemid=267

<http://penuelas-puertorico.blogspot.com/2009/09/escuela-webster.html>.

Interviews

Clara E. BalasquideTossas, gradaughter of GabinoBalasquide

Neisa García Colón, Relacionista pública del Municipio de Peñuelas

Cesar García Candelario, Casa de la historia Ramón Rivera "Bonye"

Marta Rodríguez, Casa de la historia Ramón Rivera "Bonye"

MayleneJaimán, Arte y Cultura del Municipio de Peñuelas

Elizabeth Cruz, Centro de Estudios del Municipio de Peñuelas

Lilly Acosta, Centro de Estudios del Municipio de Peñuelas

Newspapers

El Mundo

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:
Municipality of Peñuelas

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre (0.15 acre)
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1 20 741125 1997699
Zone Easting Northing

3
Zone Easting Northing

2
Zone Easting Northing

4
Zone Easting 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 Daniel Webster School.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Arq. Jorge Rigau, FAIA, Guillermo Marrero, AIT
organization Jorge Rigau Arquitectos date August 09, 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:** **AUSGS 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. Daniel WebsterSchool
2. Peñuelas, Puerto Rico
3. Miguel Ortiz, AIT
4. April30, 2012
5. Jorge Rigau Arquitectos, San Juan Puerto Rico
6. Eastfacade, looking northwest.Main façade at present day. Important features of the building, the scale, morphology and the relative plain wall surface combined with ornately decorated details help keep the building's prominence over time.
7. #1

1. Daniel WebsterSchool
2. Peñuelas, Puerto Rico
3. Miguel Ortiz, AIT
4. April 30, 2012
5. Jorge Rigau Arquitectos, San Juan Puerto Rico
6. East façade detail, looking west.Front facade window detail display (from top to bottom) a decorative vent, a horizontal ledge, an overwindow cartouche with wreath, entablature with dentil, spiral patterned columns, ovolo molding window sill, brackets and raised rectangular panels.
7. #2

1. Daniel WebsterSchool
2. Peñuelas, Puerto Rico
3. Miguel Ortiz, AIT
4. April 30, 2012
5. Jorge Rigau Arquitectos, San Juan Puerto Rico
6. East façade detail, looking southwest.Second floor balconies incorporate planters, congé moldings, medallions, urns, bas-relief rectangular panels and ledges.
7. #3

1. Daniel WebsterSchool
2. Peñuelas, Puerto Rico
3. Miguel Ortiz, AIT
4. April 30, 2012
5. Jorge Rigau Arquitectos, San Juan Puerto Rico
6. Eastfaçade detail, looking west.Epigraph engraved on marble stone shows the year of construction 1927, the name of Commissioner of the Interior Guillermo Esteves, the Commissioner of Education Juan B. Huyke, the architect Rafael Carmoega, the town's mayor Juan G. Gelpí, and the contractor Gabino Balasquide and the school principal, Lorenzo R. Purcell.
7. #4

1. Daniel Webster School
2. Peñuelas, Puerto Rico
3. Miguel Ortiz, AIT
4. April 30, 2012
5. Jorge Rigau Arquitectos, San Juan Puerto Rico
6. West façade, looking east. Added access ramp on the north side of the building. The addition does not undermine the integrity of the resource. The passageway is completely separated from the building, attached only at the point of entry.
7. #5

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Daniel Webster School

Peñuelas, Puerto Rico

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

Section number 7

Page 21

Additional Documentation Photographs

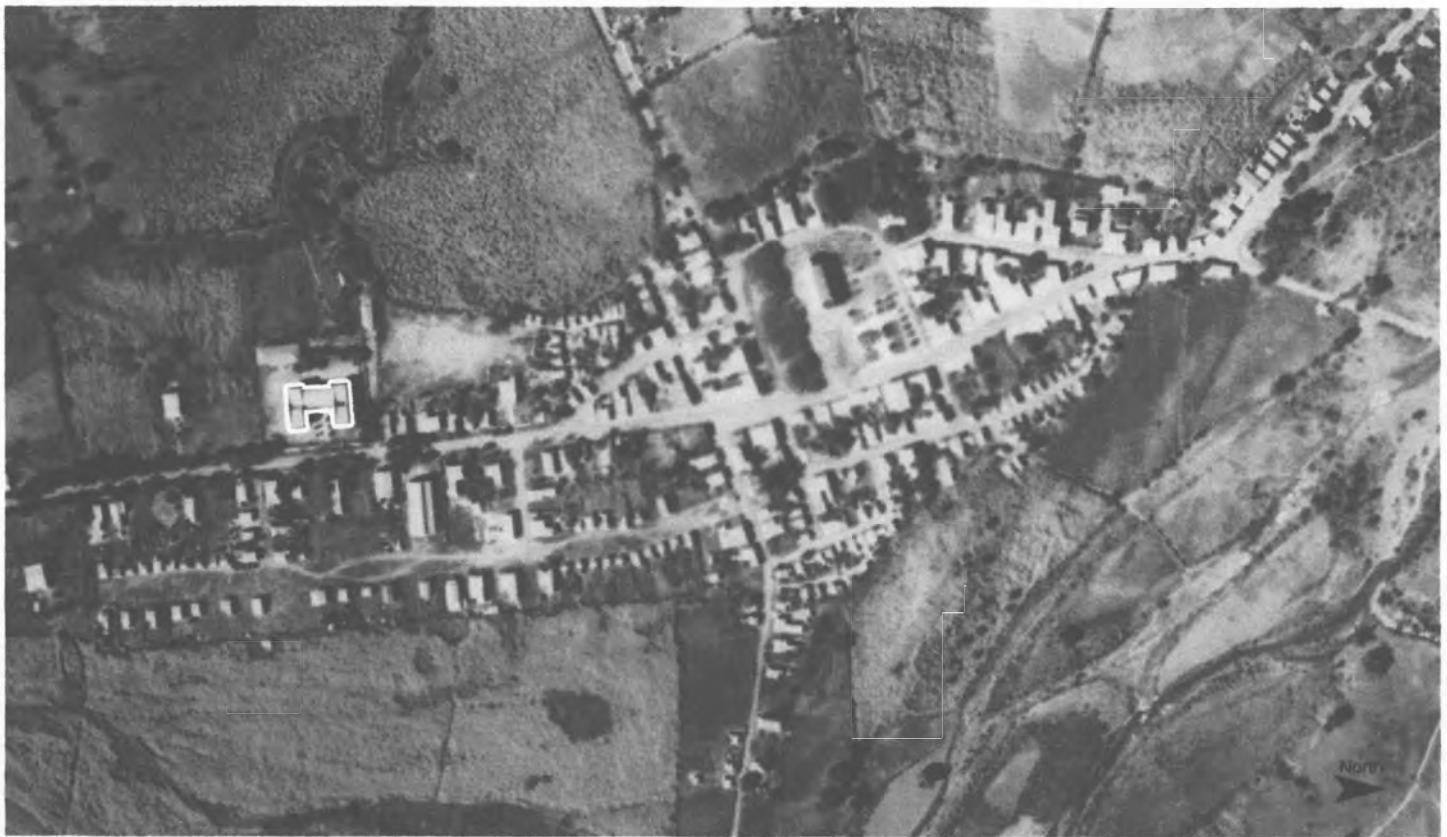


Fig. 1: 1930's aerial view of Peñuelas, Puerto Rico. Notice the scale of the Daniel Webster School in comparison with the other buildings erected at the time. The boundaries of the nominated resource are identified by an outline. Photo: 1930. Source: DTOP.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Daniel Webster School

Peñuelas, Puerto Rico

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

Section number 7

Page 22



Fig. 2: View of the main façade (east) from PR-132. Daniel Webster School, in Peñuelas Puerto Rico, symmetrical façade composition integrates a semi-enclosed patio. The placement along the main street and the C-shape floor plan endow the front court as one of the main open spaces of the town. Source: AGPR, Album Obras Públicas, #307.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Daniel Webster School

Peñuelas, Puerto Rico

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

Section number 7

Page 23

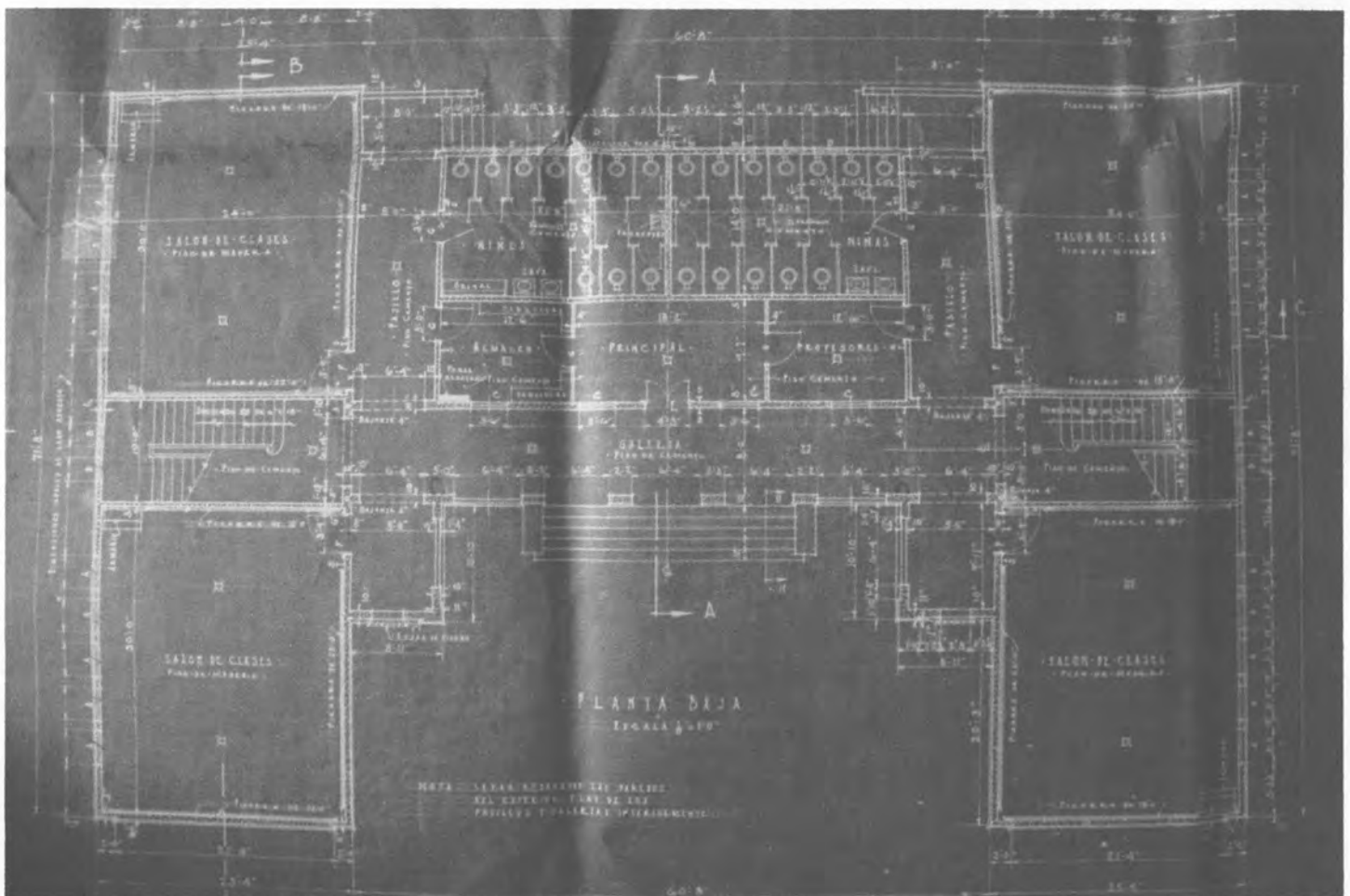


Fig. 3: The Daniel Webster School, in Peñuelas Puerto Rico, first floor incorporate an arcade that connects four classrooms, lavatories, two offices, one storage and two half-turn stairs. The classroom were located in the north and south end blocks to maximize the number of classrooms while maintaining -through the front court- a link with the city. Source: AGPR, Fondo Obras Públicas, Edificios Escolares. Caja: 1135, Legajo, 192, Exp. 1.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Daniel Webster School

Peñuelas, Puerto Rico

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

Section number 7

Page 24

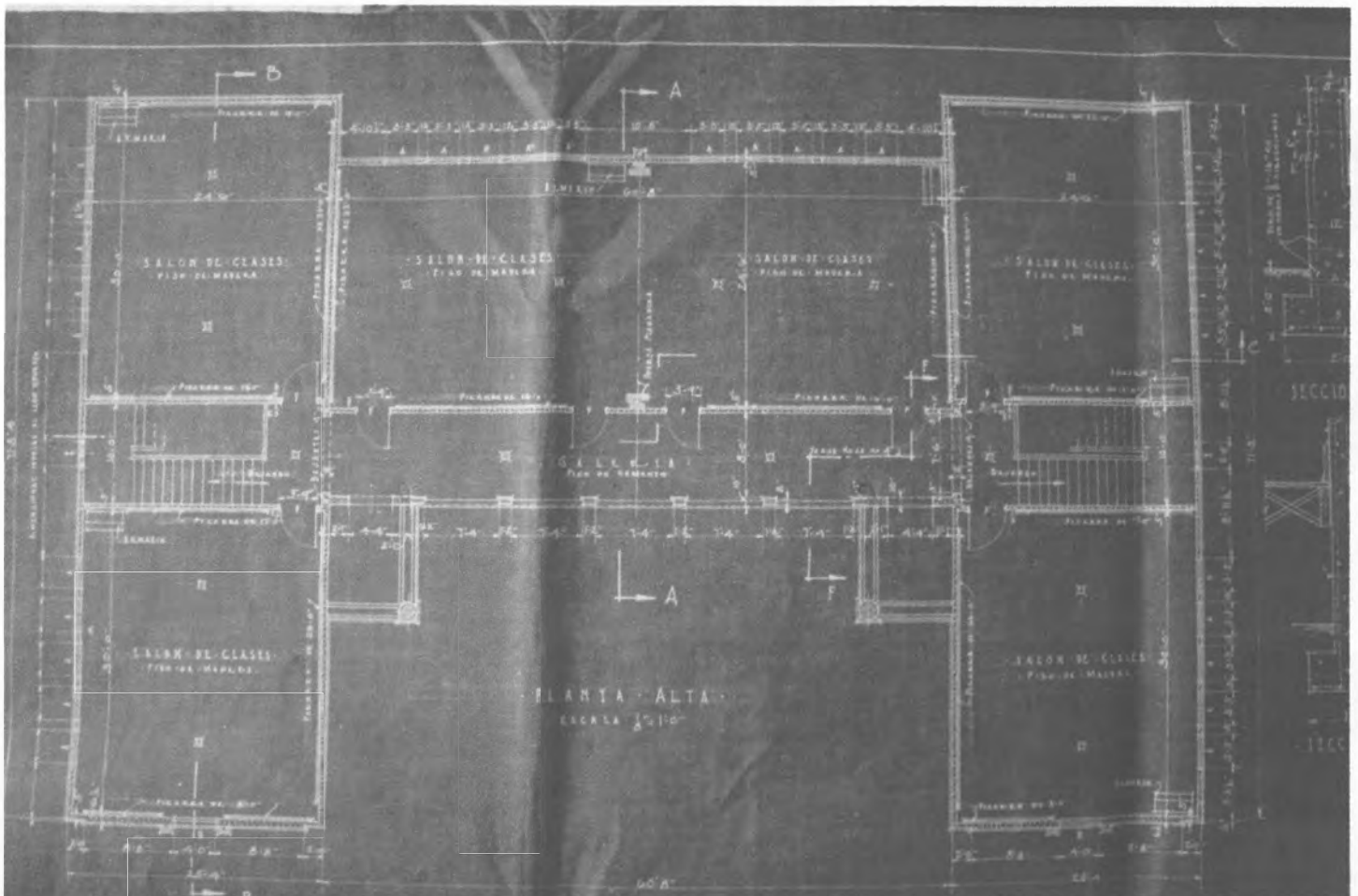


Fig. 4: The Daniel Webster School, in Peñuelas Puerto Rico, second floor included four smaller classrooms in the north and south end blocks. In the center, a set of folding doors linked and at the same time divided two additional adjoining rooms sheltered by an open gallery with balconies facing east. Source: AGPR, Fondo Obras Públicas, Edificios Escolares. Caja: 1135, Legajo, 192, Exp. 1.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Daniel Webster School

Peñuelas, Puerto Rico

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

Section number 10 Page 25

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.

DANIEL WEBSTER SCHOOL, PEÑUELAS, PUERTO RICO

Location: Luis Muñoz Rivera St. # 225 Peñuelas, Puerto Rico 00624
UTM Reference: 19, 741125, 1997699
Acreage of Property Less than one acre (0.15)



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Daniel Webster School

Peñuelas, Puerto Rico

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

Section number Additional Documentation Page 26

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.

DANIEL WEBSTER SCHOOL, PEÑUELAS, PUERTO RICO

Location: Luis Muñoz Rivera St. # 225 Peñuelas, Puerto Rico 00624
UTM Reference: 19, 741125, 1997699
Acreage of Property Less than one acre (0.15)



JORGE RIGAU
ARQUITECTOS

feet
meters 200 800



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Webster, Daniel, School
NAME:

MULTIPLE Early 20th Century Schools in Puerto Rico MPS
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: PUERTO RICO, Penuelas

DATE RECEIVED: 9/28/12 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 10/26/12
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 11/13/12 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 11/14/12
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 12000940

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 11.14.12 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.







ERIGIDO A.D. MCMXXVII

GUILLERMO ESTEVES

COM. DEL INTERIOR

RAFAEL CARMOEGA

ARQUITECTO

GABINO BALASQUIDE

CONTRATISTA

JUAN B. HUYKE

COM. DE INSTRUCCION

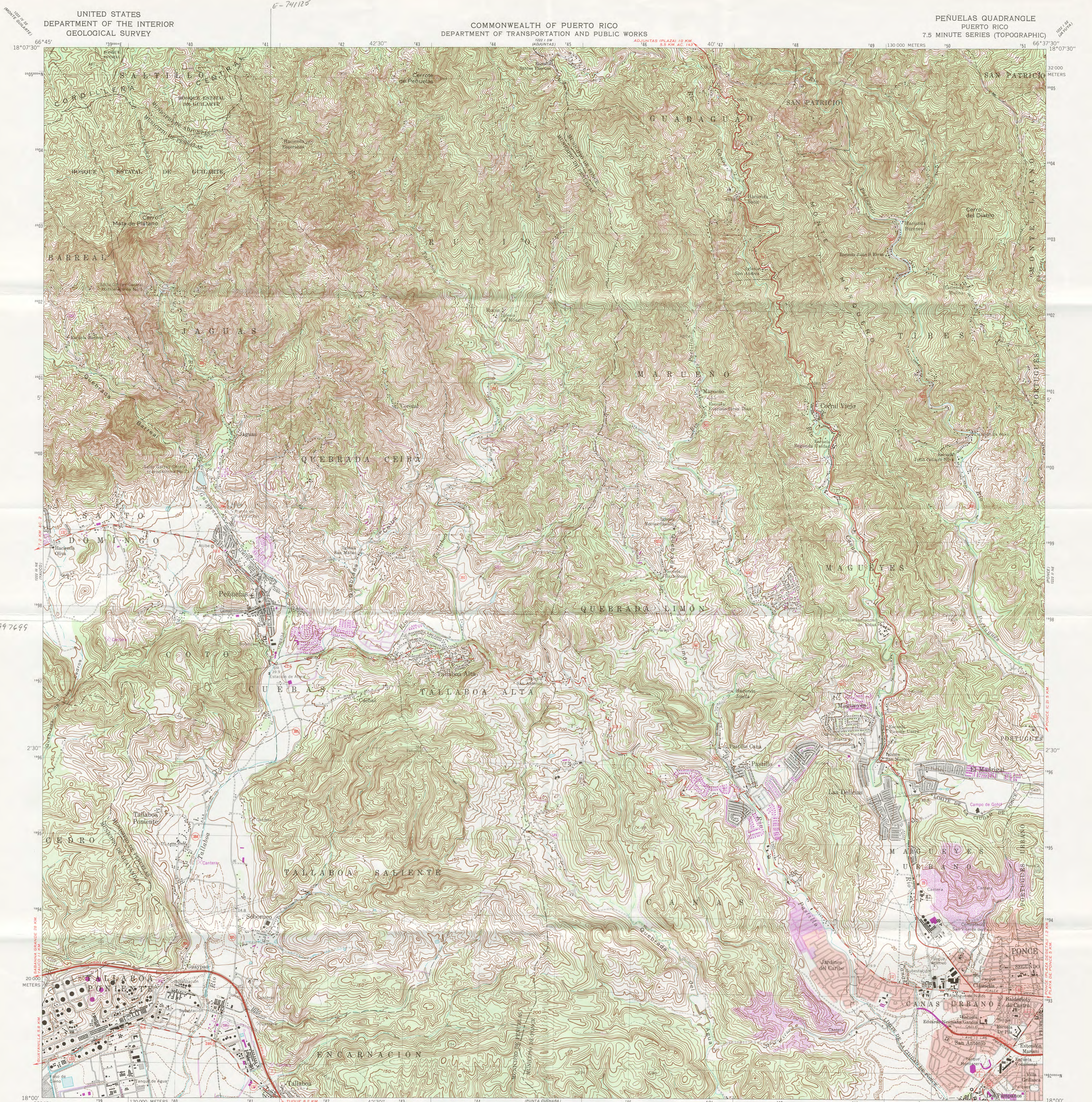
JUAN G. GELPI

ALCALDE

LORENZO R. PURCELL

DIRECTOR ESCOLAR





Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1941 and planetable surveys 1943. Revised from aerial photographs taken 1972. Field checked 1972
Polyconic projection. Puerto Rico Datum, 1940 adjustment 2000-meter grid ticks based on Puerto Rico coordinate system 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 19
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown
Barrio and municipality boundaries by the Puerto Rico Planning Board
Kilometric reference distances shown in red
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map

Revisions shown in purple and woodland compiled from aerial photographs taken 1977 and other sources. This information not field checked. Map edited 1982
Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas

SCALE 1:20,000
1000 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 6000 7000 FEET
1 0 1 KILOMETER
CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 METERS
DASHED LINES REPRESENT 5-METER CONTOURS
DOTTED LINES REPRESENT 1-METER CONTOURS
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL
THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
AND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WORKS, SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO 00910
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Primary highway, all weather, hard surface
Secondary highway, all weather, hard surface
Unimproved road, fair or dry weather
Insular Route
Light-duty road, all weather, improved surface
Unimproved road, fair or dry weather

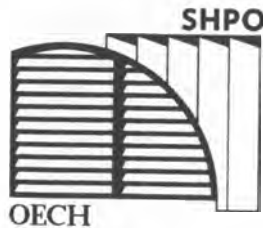
Escuela Daniel Webster
Peñuelas, P.R.
E-741125
N-1997695

PEÑUELAS, P. R.
N1800-W6637 5/7.5
1972
PHOTOREVISED 1982
DMA 1222 II NW-SERIES E835

0220

OFICINA ESTATAL DE
CONSERVACIÓN HISTÓRICA
OFICINA DEL GOBERNADOR

STATE HISTORIC
PRESERVATION OFFICE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR



September 27, 2012

Ms. Carol D. Schull, Keeper
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, NW, 8th floor (MS 2280)
Washington, DC 20005

SUBMISSIONS - Parque de Bombas Maximiliano Merced; María Dávila Semidey School; Padre Nazario School; José Miguel Gallardo School; Daniel Webster School; Williams Product Corp.; De Luxe Florida

Dear Ms. Schull:

We are pleased to submit for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places the following nominations:

- **Parque de Bombas Maximiliano Merced**, Aguas Buenas, Puerto Rico.
- **María Dávila Semidey School**, Patillas, Puerto Rico
- **Padre Nazario School**, Guayanilla, Puerto Rico
- **José Miguel Gallardo School**, Juncos, Puerto Rico
- **Daniel Webster School**, Peñuelas, Puerto Rico
- **Williams Products Corp.**, Luquillo, Puerto Rico
- **De Luxe Florida**, Florida, Puerto Rico

Should you have any questions on any of these nominations, please contact Arch. Berenice Sueiro, AIT, Deputy SHPO, at 787-721-3737 or bsueiro@prshpo.gobierno.pr.

Sincerely,

Carlos A. Rubio Cancela, Architect
State Historic Preservation Officer

CARC/BRS/JLS/jvr

Enclosures

WWW.OECH.GOBIERNO.PR