



The 628-student, 127,344-square-foot high school is part of a campus design that also includes a middle school, a high school, and several athletic buildings.

Spec-Brik® CMU from Oberfields Featured in Award-Winning Circleville, Ohio School

SPEC-BRIK® CONCRETE BRICK SUPPLIED BY OBERFIELDS LLC, IS A CENTRAL FEATURE OF THE NEW CIRCLEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL, WINNER OF THE OHIO MASONRY ASSOCIATION'S 2015 "EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES MERIT DESIGN AWARD." THE PRODUCT HELPED PROVIDE A SOLUTION THAT IS BOTH AESTHETICALLY PLEASING AND BUDGET FRIENDLY.

The school complex includes an elementary school, a middle school and a high school along with several athletic facilities. The high school's blend of Spec-Brik® and use of gabled roofs deliver a traditional face to the community. A consistent material palette and unified detailing style blends academic wings with the more playful, contemporary public areas. According to Ed Gebauer, an architectural masonry specialist at Oberfields, the company was given marching orders to produce their Spec-Brik® concrete brick units to reference a color scheme that's an integral part of Xavier University in Cincinnati.

Spec-Brik® Blends Aesthetics With Practicality

While the design specification called for a frogged concrete brick that was at least 75 percent solid, Oberfields met the spec with a 100 percent solid, frogged unit (a "frogged brick" means a unit with a depression in one or more of the bed faces (typically located on the top face). The company won praise for its efforts to produce four different color Spec-Brik units -- "Montgomery Blend," a special tan-gray unit similar to the colors found on many Xavier buildings, along with accent colors of "Hargus Blend," "Burlington Blend," and the red tone Hawthorne blend. Montgomery Blend was named for Montgomery Road, U.S. 22, that runs past Xavier University

The Spec-Brik® units were a nominal size of 4"x4"x16" (actual size, 3 5/8" by 3 5/8" by 15 5/8"). Gebauer said the larger units help define the scale and look of the project. The larger units also help control labor costs. Using a concrete brick veneer over structural concrete masonry (versus clay brick over concrete masonry units) means similar expansion and contraction rates in the structural wall and the veneer. "It's one less thing to worry about," Gebauer said.



Spec-Brik® units are available in both veneer and through wall structural unit styles where the greater cost efficiency of single wythe construction is desired.

"We're especially proud of the red units. We worked extra hard to get those just right. To produce the Montgomery blend field, we made a two-color blend, and hand palletized the third color to achieve the tri-blend mix of color."

Jurors Praise Subtle Visual Effect

Tony Costello FAIA, retired Professor Emeritus of Architecture at Ball State University, a juror of the design awards and emcee at the recent award ceremony, said: "The jury acknowledged the subtle visual impact achieved thru the use of a darker colored grid to articulate open and continuous bays with projecting top course and the corner base of selected elements.

"This impact is amplified by selecting a single brick color for these elements versus a mix in the majority of the walls," he continued. "Lastly, the jury liked the use of the (red) fourth color of brick for the cladding of the curved wall at the main entry." This, he noted, "along with the cantilevered canopy," successfully defined the glazed main entry element.

Costello reserved special praise for the way the design and the choice of material helps clearly indicate the main entrance of the building. "As a School Board member concerned for safety and security, the ability for anyone arriving at this facility for the first time, to understand where you enter, has really become very very important."

Designed with Students and the Community in Mind

SHP Leading Design, the architecture firm that designed the project, went to great pains to engage potential users of the campus prior to undertaking the project's design, according to Jeffrey A. Sackenheim, AIA, LEED AP, the firm's Vice President.

"In order to determine the most appropriate building configuration (physical location and grade level), SHP employed a variety of engagement techniques (focus groups, wide-scale community surveys, design teams and concept testing). We wanted to develop a master plan that truly reflects the values of the residents of Circleville. The resulting \$70M building program addresses the community's desire for a centralized school campus containing new elementary, middle and high school buildings, as well as several standalone athletic buildings," Sackenheim said.

In total, more than 320,000 square feet of new construction will be in place upon completion of the 3-year building program. "All academic building construction is load bearing masonry with exterior cavity wall veneer; athletic buildings are single-wythe load bearing insulated masonry. The three new educational buildings are tracking for a LEED Gold certification," he added.

The mason contractor on the project was Mouser Masonry.

"Oberfelds is very happy to have been able to make a contribution to this award-winning project which will be serving the students and community of Circleville for generations to come," Gebauer said.

