

CASE STUDY



HENRY HUDSON SCHOOL NO. 28
ROCHESTER CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

LABELLA

Relationships. Resources. Results.



2015 AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS DESIGN EXCELLENCE AWARD WINNER

LaBella's dramatic transformation of School 28 was recognized by the American Institute of Architect's Rochester Chapter for design excellence.

Project Manager and Project Architect Michael Short was also recognized as 2015's Emerging Architect of the Year.

"LaBella is thrilled to be recognized by the American Institute of Architects for School 28," LaBella President Robert A. Healy said. "Not only was the project selected from a category that included outstanding projects in higher education, government, and community sectors, but it was completed on time, on budget, and exceeded the District's M/WBE goals."

BRUTAL NO MORE

Built in 1969, this Brutalist style school in a Rochester, NY residential neighborhood was dark and austere, with any prior renovation limited by the substantial presence of regulated building materials. Abatement and a total renovation was performed on the existing 85,000 sq. ft. building, and over 8,000 sq. ft. in additions were added to the footprint.

The exterior additions allowed for a dramatically re-imagined entrance from the hulking portico of the original building. The new entrance adds usable square footage to the building, and provides a single point of entry. The whimsical square pattern on exterior surfaces plays on the existing blocky vocabulary.

An additional row of clerestory windows (pictured below, right) increases the natural light in each classroom. The new windows feature colorful frames, allowing the design team to meet the district's request for a more colorful exterior.

"The school community was unified in its request for color both inside and out of the building," Project Manager and Project Architect Michael Short said.



The building's existing main entrance felt overbearing to adults and monstrous to children.

The new entrance and windows are colorful and appropriately scaled.





Several exterior materials were considered for the new additions, with porcelain tile selected for its durability and range of available colors.

“Architects were attracted to concrete, brutalist style structures as a means of communicating strength, honesty, and seriousness, which made the style popular for government or other institutional buildings,” Short says. “We felt it was important that the additions added whimsy, youth, and play back to the conversation.”

The street facing façade is no longer a wall of concrete. Instead, transparency and color greet the neighborhood. However, given the need for a single, secure point of entry, this façade was carefully designed to avoid the appearance of an entry point into the building.

The existing exterior surfaces were cleaned and the roof was restored. Site work included new tree plantings to further soften the building façade, and improvements to sidewalks. The sidewalk improvements focused on increasing safe access to the neighboring community park, and enhancing parking lot safety.

ONCE A NEIGHBORHOOD'S ARCHITECTURAL QUANDRY, SCHOOL 28 IS NOW A MODERN, VIBRANT PLACE FOR CHILDREN.



FIRST IMPRESSIONS

The entire project scope included a new stair tower and main entrance, all new building systems, including energy efficient HVAC, electrical, and plumbing systems, new windows, and a roof restoration. However, beyond its engineering challenges, the true transformation of this building lies in the unique reconfiguration of its interior space.

With only 12 feet of floor-to-floor height to work with, the design team creatively transformed existing corridors of dark gray CMU walls, dark brown brick floors, and low ceilings. The undulating floor plan created unique pathways, accented planes, and glass storefront systems. Light and bright finishes reflect borrowed natural light.

The new floor plan also offers a new, secure single point of entry, which features a glass storefront system for visual openness and security film to protect the building's occupants. The storefront system contains the building's main office, which visitors enter from the vestibule. Following security screening, the doors at the center of the storefront system release visitors into the school.

The new lobby is awash in natural light. The new, curved stair represents the heart of the building, providing circulation and a focal point. Glass railings at the top of the stair utilize coated glass designed to reduce fingerprints.

While adding glass and transparency can result in greater project costs, maximizing the use of natural light can reduce operating costs, and provide a more effective teaching environment. Transparency also allows for the observation of visitors, staff, and students- enhancing security for the building as a whole.



THE UNDULATING FLOOR PLAN CREATED UNIQUE **PATHWAYS**, ACCENTED **PLANES**, AND **GLASS STOREFRONT SYSTEMS**. LIGHT AND BRIGHT FINISHES REFLECT BORROWED NATURAL LIGHT.

Terrazzo flooring and ceramic wall tile were prioritized within the project budget, durable but necessary finishes considering the building's kindergarten through eighth grade occupants.

"We understand that artwork and posters are going to go on the walls," Project Manager Michael Short said. "We have to provide surfaces that will meet the demands of sticky fingers and tape."

Some existing terrazzo flooring was salvaged, and in other locations, it was newly poured. "Terrazzo is easy enough to clean that we felt the finishes could go very light in color. It was important to maximize reflection of the available natural light, and completely refresh what had previously been dark gray CMU walls and, in many hallways, dark brown brick floors."





MAXIMIZING EXISTING LIGHTWELLS



An existing lightwell was preserved in the new design. The fluted concrete wall now draws the eye to a display case.

The existing cafetorium was renovated and acoustically balanced (pictured right).





FIRST FLOOR PLAN



SECOND FLOOR PLAN



Contract Documents for School 28 were produced using the Building Information Modeling (BIM) software Autodesk Revit. Drawing the building in 3D allowed end users to quickly visualize the building's form and function, and allowed the multi-disciplinary team to coordinate new and existing building systems within the minimal plenum space.

"Using Revit, any change we make to the floor plan is immediately reflected in the entire drawing set. This was crucial as we worked to finalize the corridor undulations and curves, and ensure lighting, grilles and other systems were not impacted," Architectural Designer Chris Gangemi said.

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