



### EBINGER ELEMENTARY ANNEX

📍 Chicago, IL

#### CHALLENGE

Create a magnificent exterior color gradient radiating out from the windows while complementing the historic existing building.

#### RESULTS

Modern gradient pattern created using bricks that complement the original building

#### BRICK SIZE

Utility 4x4x12

#### BRICK COLOR

Blend of Copperstone, Walnut, Terra Cotta, Desert Sand, Golden Buff, Ochre Buff, Moroccan Brown all with Matte Texture

#### ARCHITECT

Cesar Santoy, Studio ARQ

#### MASON

Vimak Construction & Masonry

#### DISTRIBUTOR

[Bricks Incorporated](#)

#### PHOTOGRAPHER

Photos by Will Quam

Text by Will Quam and Susan Jenks

## Modern Brick Gradient Brings New Energy to a Medieval Design

The school's medieval design was created by John Christensen and built in 1926. By 2018, the elementary had long-outgrown its original footprint. The construction of a 32,000 square-foot, two-story annex was approved by the Public Building Commission of Chicago (PBC) and the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) building program. Studio ARQ was selected to ensure the new interior and exterior would reflect the spirit of the students, school, and community.

#### CHALLENGE

The first challenge was to design a modern-day annex to complement the building's English-bond brick pattern, decorative spikes, and window bays. Santoy's vision was to create a magnificent exterior gradient in brick, radiating out from the windows to represent the energy and creativity of the students and teachers while paying homage to the building's historic bricks. With the design approved, Santoy and his team pondered the next steps.



Schmitt brought Interstate Brick in early in the process, positive that they'd be able to help achieve the color gradient envisioned by the architect.

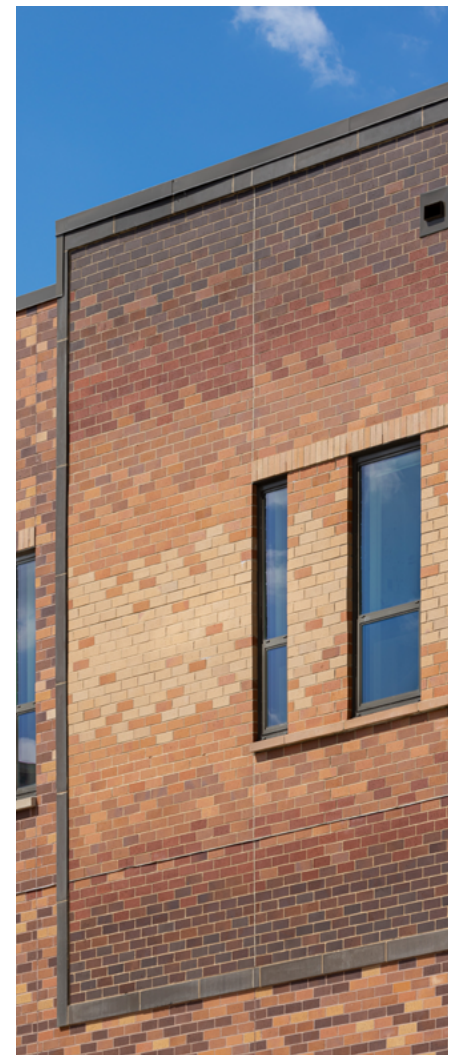
It became clear that the biggest challenge was going to be in the execution of it. Knowing the execution could be complicated, Santoy contacted Brent Schmitt of Bricks Incorporated, who had the expertise and connections to help the studio achieve their vision. The masonry gradient would require bricks of multiple colors in uniform sizes, which may seem an easy task to the casual observer. The reality is more complicated because a wall made up of different color bricks requires combining several different temperatures. Bricks shrink when fired, each color at a different rate. Clay body color, location on the kiln car, and location of the car within the kiln are all factors that effect the resulting color and size.

## SOLUTION

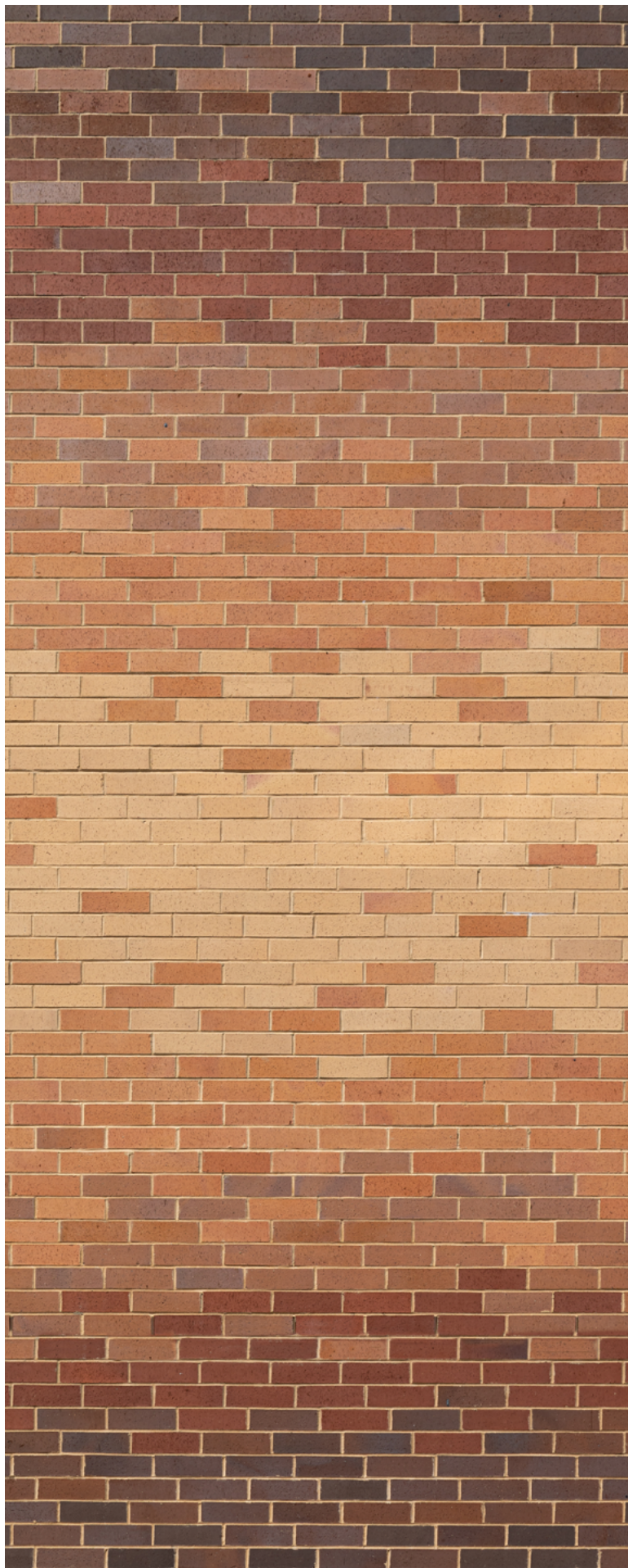
Schmitt contacted Interstate® Brick. "Interstate is so consistent. They excel at blending multiple colors and multiple firing temperatures." Their offering of colors, textures, and sizes made them



an obvious choice for this complicated project. Schmitt brought Interstate Brick in early in the process, positive that they'd be able to help achieve the color gradient envisioned by the architect. Shannon Perry, Interstate's Midwest Territory Manager, was confident about the project, "Our team is composed of vision-oriented innovators and craftsmen, including an architect, mason, and engineer. Once we understood Santoy's intent for Ebinger, our team was able to provide a range of solutions." To help Santoy select the colors, Interstate provided small samples of several colors and textures that would complement the buff and gray bricks on the original building.







To help Santoy select the colors, Interstate provided small samples of several colors and textures.



VIEW  
COLOR

Desert Sand, Matte



VIEW  
COLOR

Golden Buff, Matte



VIEW  
COLOR

Ochre Buff, Matte



VIEW  
COLOR

Copperstone, Matte



VIEW  
COLOR

Terra Cotta, Matte



VIEW  
COLOR

Walnut, Matte



Moroccan Brown, Matte (custom color)

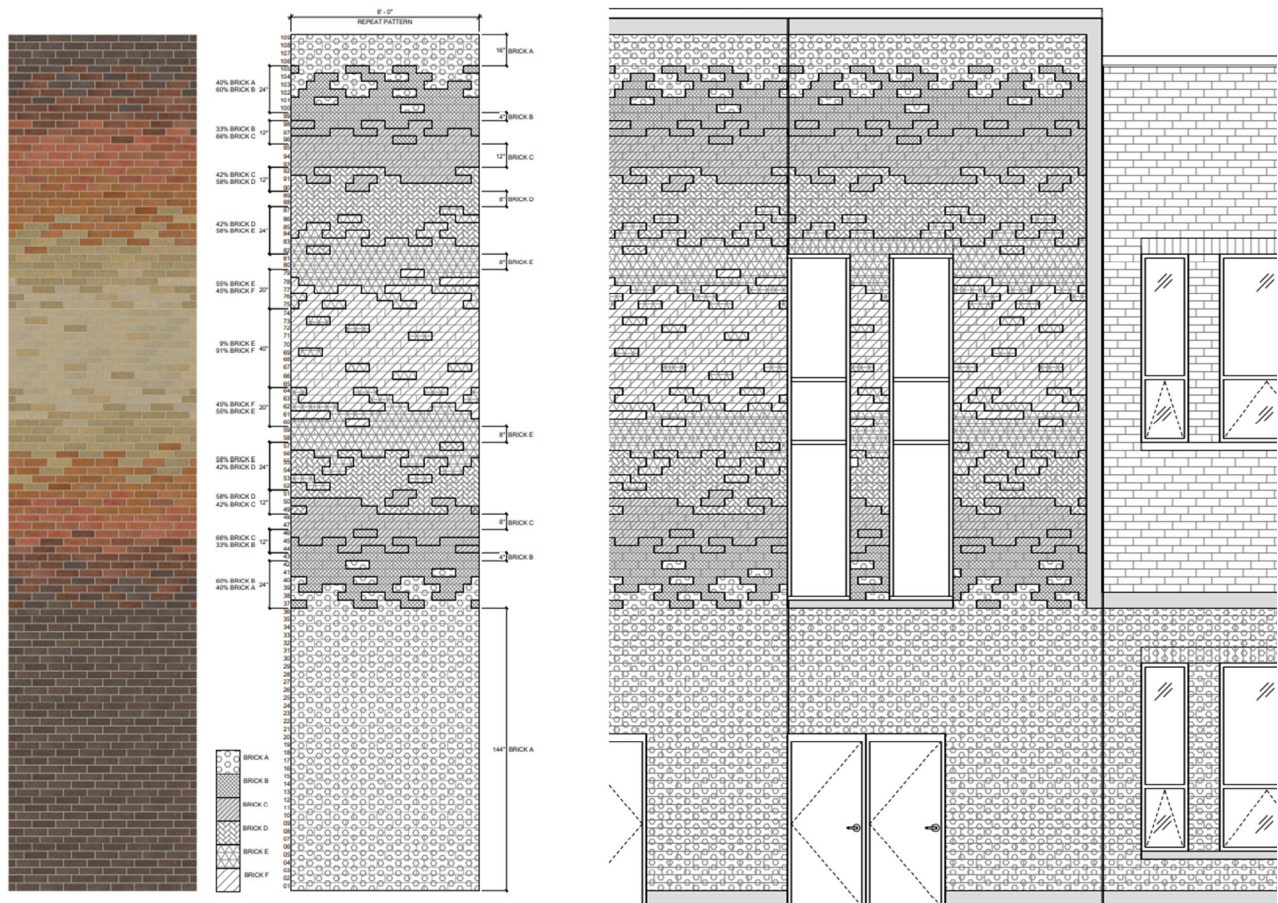


# Strategizing The Final Design

## BLENDING OLD & NEW

Colors were selected to complement the buff and gray bricks on the original building.

Normally, masons don't require instructions, but in this case success would depend upon consensus on the brick installation strategy. Documents included detailed drawings of the wall elevations and keys for color variations with hatching and shading—all so the masons had a clear path of execution. Special praise is due to Vimak Construction and their masons who carried out this incredible pattern on the wall.





The final design showcases how brick can be used as a contemporary art form while creating a bridge to the grandeur of the past.

## RESULTS

The new annex features the modern gradient pattern, while incorporating bricks that are sized to complement and harmonize with the original 1926 building. The final design showcases how brick can be used as a contemporary art form while creating a bridge to the grandeur of the past.

Have questions? [Talk to one of our consultants](#), visit [interstatebrick.com](http://interstatebrick.com) or call [1-800-233-8654](tel:1-800-233-8654).

