

Isely Traditional Magnet

Since the construction of Isely Elementary School was not completed for the fall of 1949-50, children in the afternoon half of the double shift at Fairmount School were selected to attend the new school. On November 10, 1949, Isely, the city's most ultramodern school building, was opened with 425 students. The cost of the school designed by Schmidt, McVay and Peddie was \$425,000.

The school was named in honor of the late W.H. Isely, first dean of Fairmount College and prominent civic leader. The building is of buff colored brick, single-story construction in the shape of an "E" which permits all 16 classrooms to receive light and air from both sides of the room, an innovation at that time in Wichita school buildings.

Radiant heating pipes are imbedded in the floor and individual sanitary facilities in the kindergarten and first three grades' rooms. The upper-grade classrooms were installed in a parallel wing, entering into a corridor providing individual lockers. The vertical portion of the "E" contains a library, workroom, health room, lounge and the school office.

Miss Laura Houk was the first building principal to administer the school. Isely was the 38th grade school built in the system and opened with a staff of 14 classroom teachers. During the school year 1950-51, the Isely student population grew from 425 to 620. The next school year, 1951-52, the student population grew to 783 with 22 classroom teachers.

The 1967-68 school year produced the highest enrollment figure with over 900 pupils in attendance. Twenty-one annexes were used to house the growing student population.

By 1970-71, Isely had a student body that was 99 percent black, and in 1971-72, the school was closed in accordance with the integration plan adopted by the Board of Education at that time. **On February 1, 1973, Isely was reopened as an integrated school serving pupils with exceptional abilities in grades four, five and six. The children who attended were identified and recommended for participation by school principals and staff, with final selection made by a screening committee. The instructional program was designed to foster the unusual abilities of the children. The enrollment was maintained at approximately 225.**

At the beginning of the 1988-89 year, sixth grade students were incorporated into the middle school program and Isely's name was changed from **Isely Alternative School** to Isely Enrichment Magnet School with grades 3-5.

In August 1993, Isely became a school governance pilot school. Richard Davis was half time principal, half time teacher. In 1994, the school returned to regular status with a full time principal.

At the April 8, 1996 meeting, the Board of Education approved the closing of the Isely School building at the end of the 1995-96 school year, and the entire program relocated to Mueller Elementary building as a school-within-a-school.

In the summer of 1997, the Board of Education gave approval to re-open the Isely building to house an Edison School. The Board of Education approved the name change to Isely Edison Academy. The enrollment for the 1997-98 school year began with approximately 280 students. Students who attended Isely Edison Academy went through an application process. This school offered: an extended school day - so students have more time for learning and to provide time for learning the arts, foreign languages, and physical education; a longer school year - students attend school 206 days a year; a computer in the home of every student - to promote regular communication among parents, teachers and students and to make advanced technology an integral part of the child's future.

At the end of the 2001-2002 school year, the Edison program at Isely was stopped, and Isely became a traditional Magnet School beginning with the 2002-2003 school year.

In April 2000, the voters of the Wichita School District approved a \$284.5 million bond issue. The projects began in the fall of 2000 and were completed over the next five years. The plan built 19 multipurpose rooms, upgraded science labs, replaced portable classrooms with permanent construction, improved handicap accessibility to all buildings, rebuilt five existing