

Wedgwood

Name:	Wedgwood Elementary School	Enrollment:	371
Address:	2720 NE 85th Street	Nickname:	Dolphins
Configuration:	K-5	Color:	Wedgwood blue



Wedgwood, 2000 ©Mary Randlett SPSA 279-5

The neighborhood now called Wedgwood was first settled around 1900 by Charles Thorpe, who raised ginseng there after learning of its medicinal properties while in China. In the 1920s, Seattle University purchased the area, which it was considering as a campus location. The university sold the land in the 1940s to developer Albert Balch who built a number of homes in the area. Because his wife was dissatisfied with his earlier naming of View Ridge, he suggested that she pick a name for the new development. She chose the name because of her fondness for Wedgwood china.

The post-World War II movement to the suburbs, spurred by economic prosperity and population growth, meant that neighborhoods like Wedgwood were increasingly popular. The new houses boasted wide lots and all the modern conveniences. Large trees and lack of city noise and traffic gave the area a country atmosphere.

In 1952, Wedgwood clearly needed a school, considering the overcrowded conditions at Ravenna, View Ridge, and Bryant. The school district selected a former cherry and apple orchard as the site for the school. As a short-term solution to the crowded conditions at nearby schools, a 16-portable school was opened there in 1953 (now NE 85th and 27th Avenue NE). Twelve classrooms housing 400 children grades K-5 opened three weeks into the fall semester. The 6th grade was added the following year. In 1954-55, 14 classes were housed in 12 portables by double-shifting four classes.

Because of construction delays, the new building was not ready in April 1955 as expected. It opened dramatically in early June with only a half month remaining in the school year. Many of the pupils brought wagons from home to transport their possessions and books as they moved from the portables to the permanent building. The students especially appreciated the auditorium-lunchroom and gymnasium.

The next fall about 140 pupils were added from Maple Leaf and a

few from Ravenna. Enrollment peaked in 1957–58 with 897 students. After graduation, students went to Eckstein or Addams for junior high. (Addams closed in 1984.)

As part of the district’s desegregation program, Wedgwood formed a triad with Leschi and Decatur. Wedgwood and Decatur became K–3, and Leschi housed K, 4–5 from 1978 to 1988.

For many years, the Wedgwood Community Club has sponsored a Halloween painting contest for children in the neighborhood, most of them students at Wedgwood. The youngsters paint the windows of businesses for which the community club awards prizes.

Wedgwood houses special education programs for preschool through grade 5 and a Spectrum program for highly capable students. It has been recognized for high academic achievement and its active parent program. The Student Council works closely with staff to implement “School Spirit Days,” an art show and other activities.

Name: **Wedgwood Elementary School**
Location: 2720 NE 85th Street
Building: 22-room reinforced concrete
Architect: John Graham & Co.
Site: 4.48 acres

1954: Named on April 16
1955: Opened on June 1



Wedgwood, 1960 SPSA 279-1