

# REKNOWN MUSICAL CLINICIAN STUDIES KISD ORCHESTRA PROGRAM

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Guest clinician, conductor, national presenter, and adjudicator Ruth Kurtis toured KISD campuses before the official winter break to see elementary, middle school, and high school orchestra students in action. Invited by KISD Orchestra Directors Pat Lee and Jacobi Caldwell, Kurtis offered to visit each campus orchestra class and provide a full analysis of the program, offer suggestions, and provide further financial and statistical information later in the month.

Said Jacobi Caldwell between campus visits on Kurtis' last day to tour the district, "We really wanted Ruth to give us a true picture of ourselves and so far, she says she is quite impressed. She loves the playing level of our students and has enjoyed working with them using technology for intonation. I have enjoyed her visit and value her thoughts involving our artistic progress with the children."

Kurtis is a thirty year veteran of public school teaching and has recently retired and moved to Arizona. Prior to retirement she taught in McKinney ISD in Texas where she led the orchestra team in growing the program from 72 students to over 500 students in just three years. She has developed other programs in Texas and in Michigan and her orchestras won many state and national awards. Kurtis holds positions in several associations including the Texas Music Educators Association, UIL, and as president for the Texas Orchestra Directors Association, the Texas Chapter of the American String Teachers Association (ASTA) and she currently chairs the ASTA Committee for School Orchestras and Strings. She was recently honored as the 2009 Texas Orchestra Director of the Year.

For more information on the KISD orchestra program, contact Jacobi Caldwell at (257-2207, ext. 315).

**Photo: (Lower row) Ruth Kurtis, Jacobi Caldwell. (Second row) Pat Lee**