

November 22, 2011

Dear Kings Band Family,

After 30 years of wonderful and incredible musical experiences in the great Kings School District, I have decided that it is time to “officially” announce my retirement. I think back in amazement that when I first drove to Kings High School for a job interview in 1981, I stopped at the Fields-Ertel exit for gas and there was only one service station and a pizza parlor! However, I am even more amazed when I consider the growth of our school facilities, faculty, the quality of education and extra-curricular programs over the last thirty years.

I plan to retire at the end of the current school year and want to make that known early so that the Band Staff and the Kings Administration have plenty of time to find a stellar replacement. I am certain that the current band staff and any new addition to the staff will continue the Kings Band tradition of excellence and develop an even higher level of performance in coming years! There may be some restructuring of staff responsibilities and I am sure those will only enhance the quality of the Kings Bands. As staffing information becomes available, it will be sent to all band families. It will be very rewarding for me to watch the future growth of the Arts at Kings during the coming years!

I am excited about beginning this new chapter in my life. Professionally, I will be able to consult with other band programs, teach privately and actually practice my instrument on a regular basis. Personally, I can become a husband whose primary address is home vs. the Kings band room; and I might even become a little bit better golfer?

I am certain the Kings Band staff will continue to let me be involved in some fashion with the Kings Band program and I will cherish those opportunities. Kings is a very special place and it is difficult to make this decision. Many of my retired band director friends tell me it is best to retire while you still love what you do. And I do still love the students and teaching them music, musicianship, teamwork and performance. However, I must face the fact that I am getting tired physically and can no longer give the students the energy that I have always tried to give and that they deserve. So I will now get my “kid fix” by teaching privately and consulting with bands in the coming years.

The last thirty years have been an absolute joy because thousands of students and parents have given me so many treasured memories for which I am extremely grateful! I am proud of what the Kings Schools have become, proud of my fellow faculty members and most importantly, I am so very proud of the reputation of excellence that our band students have built over the last three decades! This is not a sad occasion, but a joyful one because I know I have always given my best and I have earned this time to reflect back and discover what lies ahead.

Thanks to God for placing me in such a great place to work with awesome young people all these years.

Thanks to my wife for understanding my priorities. [She wants the hearers/readers to know that she loves that I chose this profession and that I chose to do it with excellence. She, too, loves the Kings music students, the band boosters and the KMA staff, some of whom have been like extended family these many years.]

Thanks to my fellow Kings teachers and administrators, past and present, who have inspired me.

Thanks to the students and parents, past and present, who have impacted my life in unforgettable ways. Know that I will continue to be the number one band fan of the Kings Band! I will always cheer on the kids who wear the red and blue.

Thanks to my fellow teachers, truly talented and caring people who made coming to work every day a joy for so many years. I could not wish for a better staff: Mike and Jennifer Maegly, Jen Reeder and Joe Polen. Whoever replaces me on staff will be an incredibly blessed individual.

GO BAND! GO KNIGHTS!

Greg Mills