

Felix Varela Senior High School

2019/20

Handbook



Go Vipers!

Felix Varela Senior High School

Dr. Sam Lussier, Director of Music
15255 SW 96 Street, Miami, Fl. 33196
305 752 3324

Aug 12, 2019

Dear Parents and Students:

As we begin the 2019-20 school year, I am looking forward to a very successful and enjoyable experience. We have a wonderful group of students and parents returning to the Band and Chorus program, and I am proud to be tasked with continuing the tradition of excellence in music performance at Varela.

I have been a professional musician for 39 years, and a music educator for 27. I have a Bachelor of Arts (Concentration Music) from the University of Ottawa, a Master of Music (Studio Jazz Writing) from the University of Miami, and a Doctorate of Education (Curriculum & Instruction/Instructional Leadership) from Florida International University. I served a total of 12 years in the Canadian Armed Forces as a trumpet player, pianist, and arranger.

I am the former Director of Jazz Studies at Jacksonville State University (Alabama) & Florida International University; and the former Director of Instrumental Music at the Academy of Arts and Minds Charter High School. I am proudly serving in my 9th year here at Varela and with your help, I will continue to do my best to raise the quality of the Varela music program to new heights.

Varela is a SACS accredited institute with high academic standards. Those standards are also an important part of our Performing Arts Electives as well. Our 4 performing ensembles (The Band of Mystery Marching Band, the Wind Ensemble, the Viper Select Chorus & Band, and the Concert Jazz Band) will perform a combined 35-40 events this school year. Please take a few moments to plan to see our major concert performances November 7th, December 11th, April 2nd, and May 14th. Students in the Varela music program also play a significant role in bringing Varela's yearly Spring Musical to life. This year it is scheduled for March 11-13.

The Band of Mystery Marching Band is a co-curricular activity that is aligned with the Wind Ensemble and Concert Jazz Band. **All students who wish to participate in either the Wind Ensemble or Concert Jazz Band MUST audition to participate in the Band of Mystery Marching Band program.** All marching band students will receive ½ Physical Education credit and 100 community service hours for a full season of participation. This includes band camps, weekly afterschool rehearsals on Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:00 – 6:00, Saturday Competitions, FMBC States in Daytona (Nov 22-24), all Scheduled Football Games, Basketball Games, and both the 3-Kings and 4th of July Parades.

A total of 4 Football Games have been scheduled for the band by the Athletic Director. Football games are scheduled as follows:

Friday Aug 30th @ 3:30 p.m. at Varela

Friday September 6th @ 3:30 at Varela

Friday September 13th @ 3:30 at Varela

Friday September 27th (Varela's Homecoming Game) at Tropical Park at 7:00 p.m.

Marching Band Competitions:

Sat Oct 5 Flanagan High School Falcon Sound Marching Competition

Sat Oct 19 Hialeah Showcase of Champions Marching Competition

Sat Oct 26 FBA District 16 MPA Marching Evaluation

Mon Oct 28 Rain-out Date for FBA District 16 MPA Marching Evaluation

Sat Nov 2 Park Vista Marching Competition

Fri-Sun Nov 22-24 FMBC States Marching Competition

For our incoming parents (and those returning) please feel free to come to the band office before or after school to say hi, and meet our excellent team of parent volunteers and student leaders. Also, please feel free to get actively involved with our Green and Black Band Parents Association (GBBPA). For information contact Mrs. Vivian Perez, Association President or Mrs. Madelene Garcia, Association Vice-President at GBBPA@hotmail.com; or after school for more information.

The information in this handbook covers the policies and procedures of the Instrumental and Vocal Music program at Felix Varela Senior High School. Please take the time to thoroughly go over this book with your child, and return the signed contract to me as soon as possible.

If you have any questions regarding the Instrumental and Vocal Music Program at Felix Varela, please feel free to contact me either by phone (305) 752-3324, by email at (slussier@dadeschools.net), in person before classes (7:00 a.m. to 7:15 a.m.), or after school (2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.) Monday through Friday.

Sincerely,

Dr. Sam Lussier
Director of Bands

Preface: The Felix Varela Marching Band Commitment

Proficiency on a musical instrument and in color guard techniques takes time and effort. Being in the Felix Varela Marching Band, whether as an instrumentalist or color guard member, is not merely an "activity" - it is a lifestyle, a commitment, and an academic endeavor. The student has embarked on an exciting and important experience that will be cherished for the remainder of their life. The student will make new friends, devise new goals, and enjoy success through arduous work.

Contained in this packet are rules, guidelines, and expectations that the student will agree to follow. The student is asked to sign a contract that states acceptance of the contents of this packet. Should the contents not be fully understood, concerns and questions must be communicated to the band director prior to signing any agreement contained herein. Should a conflict arise between the band and another school activity, sport, community activity, or a job, the student is expected to remain committed to the band. Their grade depends on it.

In 2000, the State of Florida began to recognize fine arts courses as core curriculum when calculating a student's G.P.A. for high school graduation. Students who miss rehearsals or performances as a part of home punishment may place their grade in jeopardy. If you would like suggestions or guidance for alternatives to using band classes to discipline your child, or if you have any other questions about this policy, you may contact the band director at (305) 752-3324

Our goals are simple:

Have Fun! Learn something new every single day! Develop a love and appreciation for everything we do! Make lifelong friends! Develop a skill-set that will give you the tools you need to succeed in College/University! Develop a skill-set that will help you to pay for College/University no matter your program of study! Make your High School experience an incredible one! Travel! Perform! Be a part of the action! Put your skills up against students throughout South Florida! Earn the respect of your peers!

Students in band classes test 17% higher in Math and 16% higher in Reading!
99% of students who are in band for 4 years successfully graduate High School!
93% of students who are in band attend a 4-yr University!
86% of students who are in band attend a 4-yr University for free!
96% of students who are in band graduate, attend a 4-yr University for free, and go on to become doctors, lawyers, engineers, teachers, professors, administrators, politicians, entrepreneurs, firefighters, soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, coast guard, etc.....

**This handbook contains guidelines that may be revised throughout the course of the year.
Revisions may be sent home to parents through students.**

Section 1: Program Philosophy & Objectives

The directors and staff are committed to developing a well-rounded, expressive student that not only is a fine performer but demonstrates a heightened sense of personal/social skills which include, but are not limited to: team work, promptness, responsibility, conduct, and effort. Also important is the desire to emphasize artistic expression through music or dance as a top priority. Instrumentalists will be able to demonstrate proficiency on a wind or percussion instrument through performance and practice. They will demonstrate music literacy in relation to reading music, as well as the expressive and stylistic nuance associated with a piece of music. Furthermore, the student will demonstrate characteristics associated with good musicianship including, but not limited to: tone, posture, rhythmic accuracy, instrument care and maintenance, and social and conduct skills associated with performing ensembles. Each Color Guard member will demonstrate performing competencies that focus on dance and the utilization of standard band auxiliary equipment including, but not limited to: flags, rifles, and sabers. Specific classroom objectives are derived from the MENC National Standards for Music Education and are also cross-referenced using the benchmarks outlined within the Sunshine State Standards.

MENC National Standards for Music Education

1. Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
2. Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
3. Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments.
4. Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines.
5. Reading and notating music.
6. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.
7. Evaluating music and music performances.
8. Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts.
9. Understanding music in relation to history and culture.

Section 2: Attendance Policies

The key to success for any performing group is regular attendance. The director and staff make a conscious effort to provide all students and parents with the earliest possible notification of all events. They also adhere to a 72-hour notice policy regarding rehearsals and performances. This policy states that students will not be required to attend any rehearsal, sectional, or performance scheduled by staff without a minimum of 72 hours' notice.

Students should not become involved with activities that may directly conflict with band/chorus activities.

DAILY CLASS ATTENDANCE

- Instrumentalists will report to their assigned seat in the band room with a working instrument, all necessary accessories, pencil, music, and a music stand no later than 5 minutes after the tardy bell rings. Vocalists are held to the same high standard.

- Only tardy passes from administrators will be accepted without prior approval from the band/choir director. Students must confer with their director prior to any appointment or make-up test they desire to schedule with another teacher or counselor.

ABSENCES

- Students will strive for perfect attendance.
- It is band/choir policy that students must contact their director prior to any absence. Unless it is an extreme emergency, (a reasonable effort of communication is still expected) contact must be made no later than 24 hours prior to any absence.
- Following an absence, the student must provide a note from a parent or guardian explaining the nature of the absence. Parents should also get all absences cleared through the school attendance office.
- Any absence from rehearsals, excused or unexcused, may result in the forfeiture of a performing spot.
- Missing a scheduled rehearsal during marching season, whether excused or unexcused, may result in the student being “benched” for that week’s game and will not perform on the field. Students will still be expected to attend the game and perform in the stands.

PERFORMANCES

- Students are expected to attend every performance and District Evaluation.
- The director must be notified in writing of any scheduled absence that conflicts with a performance published in this handbook's calendar.
- Performances include, but are not limited to: pep rallies (BOM only), football games (BOM only), band competitions & evaluations (Concert Jazz Band, Wind Ensemble MPA’s), parades (BOM only), Superintendent’s Honor Band, MDC Honor Band, and scheduled Fall, Winter and Spring concerts and recitals.
- Performance no shows will lower the students grade by one letter.

WORK

- Work is not an excuse to be late or to miss any practice or performance.

Any student who finds that work interferes with attendance may be excluded from remaining activities at the discretion of their director. Officers may be removed from their position for missing a band event due to work.

MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

Parents are requested to make a reasonable effort to schedule medical appointments at times that will not interfere with practices and performances. Please make every effort to schedule medical appointments during off days. Students are reminded of the policy to notify the director prior to any absence via a phone call and a follow up note from the medical office in which you visited. Please be reminded that during marching season even a medical appointment may result in the student being “benched” from that week’s football game show (BOM only). Students will still be expected to attend the game and perform in the stands.

ORTHODONTIC AND DENTAL PROCEDURES

Orthodontic adjustments and dental procedures can, and do, have a great impact on wind instrumentalist’s ability to perform. Parents are requested to schedule orthodontic and dental

procedures at least two weeks prior to a performance. Major work may require a longer recovery period. Consult with your orthodontist or dentist if you have any concerns.

Section 3: Eligibility

Participating in the Felix Varela Band means that you are a member of a group of individuals that supports school spirit and pride. Specific standards of eligibility must be maintained.

GRADE REQUIREMENTS

- **Students must maintain a 2.0 minimum G.P.A.**
- The director may review grades with the Activities Director periodically.
- Failure to maintain minimum grade requirements may result in exclusion from certain activities as mandated by M-DCPS, FSMA, and Florida State Law.

ENROLLMENT

- Instrumentalists are strongly encouraged to be enrolled in a band class to participate in the Band of Mystery.
- Students enrolled in Wind Ensemble or Concert Jazz Band are required to audition to participate in the Band of Mystery Marching Program.
- A comprehensive description of instrumental music courses offered at Felix Varela High School is posted in the school's curriculum bulletin and is available in the school APC's office and on the school's website.

PERFORMANCE ELIGIBILITY (BOM Only)

- During band camp, the director assigns students a performance spot. This is based on attendance, effort, ability, and conduct.
- Students who have not submitted their uniform payment and paperwork (i.e., uniform order form, contract, media and health forms) prior to camp may be designated as an alternate.
- Students who enter the marching program after band camp, or who develop poor attendance and/or conduct habits may be designated as an alternate.
- An alternate may be assigned to move "props". This is still considered a performance spot.
- Performance status is determined through ability and attendance, not seniority.
- Certain factors may result in the loss of a performance spot (refer to Section 2: **Attendance**, Section 5: **Conduct** and Section 6: **Uniforms** for more details).

All BOM members will have numerous performance opportunities throughout the year. There may, however, be times in each performance where the routine can only accommodate a set number of performers. Students must realize that membership alone does not guarantee a performance spot. Any member who is assigned an alternate spot continues to be evaluated by the rules and regulations set forth in this handbook.

Section 4: BAND/CHORUS LEVELS AND PLACEMENT

Felix Varela Senior High School currently offers five (5) music classes during the day and one class after school. All ensemble placements (periods 1,3,4,5) are at the discretion of the Director of Music. Students who wish to take Dual-Enrollment classes require a signature from Dr. Lussier and approval from the APC.

PERIOD 1: CHORUS

The Varela Chorus is a major performance ensemble that performs in conjunction with the Wind Ensemble and Jazz Band as well as on its own - both on school grounds and in the Miami-Dade community. Previous singing experience is not a requirement for participation. Students are required to learn basic music theory in order to successfully perform their individual parts. This ensemble regularly sings in 3-part harmony (SAB) – **it is not a Karaoke class!!** The Viper Select is an elite group of 25 singers selected from chorus to perform at local competitions, FVA evaluations, and special events.

PERIOD 2: BEGINNING BAND

Beginning Band is designed to teach basic music theory and reading skills through performance. **This is the only band class requiring no prior experience in music.** Students will be introduced to a variety of instruments and will be permitted to select one for use during class. With the permission from the instructor, a student may be permitted to change instruments after the first 9 weeks of classes. Students in this ensemble are required to perform daily practice on their instruments (verified by a parent or legal guardian). The instruments utilized in this class include Flute, Clarinet, Oboe, Bassoon, Saxophone, Trumpet, French horn, Trombone, Baritone, Tuba, and Percussion (only after successful completion of the first 9 weeks). There are no piano, guitar, or strings (except Acoustic Bass) available in this class.

PERIOD 3: CONCERT JAZZ BAND

Concert Jazz Band is an advanced level jazz ensemble designed for advanced students. **This ensemble requires a minimum of 2-3 years of ensemble experience, plus at least 1 year of experience in jazz; and permission from the ensemble instructor. Participation in Marching Band is Mandatory!** Students selected for this ensemble will be expected to perform daily practice on their instruments and individual parts (verified by a parent or legal guardian), as well as have sectionals after school, or on weekends in preparation for upcoming performances and District Evaluations. The instruments utilized in this class include Trumpet, Trombone, Saxophone, Piano, Acoustic or Electric Bass, Drums, Guitar, and Latin Percussion.

PERIOD 4: WIND ENSEMBLE

Wind ensemble is an advanced level ensemble designed for those students who have successfully completed the intermediate level (Concert Band). **This ensemble requires a minimum of 2-3 years of ensemble experience, in addition to permission from the instructor. Participation in Marching Band is Mandatory!** Students selected for this ensemble

will be expected to perform daily practice on their instruments and individual parts (verified by a parent or legal guardian), as well as have sectionals after school, or on weekends in preparation for upcoming performances and FBA Music Performance Assessments (District Evaluations), All-State, and S&E. The instruments utilized in this class include Flute, Piccolo, Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, Oboe, Bassoon, Saxophone, Trumpet, French horn, Trombone, Euphonium, Tuba, and Percussion. There is no piano, guitar, or strings (except Acoustic Bass) allowed in this class.

PERIOD 5 & 6: Duel-Enrollment Music Appreciation & Jazz History

These two 3-credit college courses are designed to give the student an overview of musical concepts (History, Theory, Harmony, Styles, Analysis) dating from the Middle Ages through Modern time. Music Appreciation covers primarily Classical composers, literature, and all styles up to and including 20th Century American music. Jazz History covers the evolution of Jazz and Popular Music from the late 19th Century through Present-day.

Section 5: Grading

Although every student expects an "A" in a band or chorus class elective, it is earned not given. As in any other academic classes, your grades will be determined by level in which the student meets the course objectives as stated in Section 1: **Program Philosophy and Objectives.**

COMPUTATION OF GRADES

Academic and effort grades will be based on a combination of daily participation, written and playing tests, and participation in all performances. **There will be a minimum of two grades per week in each class.**

DAILY PARTICIPATION GRADE

In order to receive a satisfactory grade, students must bring their instruments, and other required material to class; and to actively participate in the day's activities. Active participation includes rehearsing each and every day, unless a note signed by a parent or legal guardian is presented before class; explaining the reason why the student is unable to rehearse that day. Verbal excuses will not be accepted. Failure to participate, without producing a signed note, will result in an 'F' grade for the day. In addition to rehearsals, students will be required to take notes periodically; and complete theory assignments in class and at home for grades.

Required Materials:
(Instrumental only)

Instrument (w/ all accessories)
Music Manuscript Paper
Regular Lined Paper
Pencil/Eraser/Sharpener
Band Method Book

Accessories are different for each instrument, and may include Drum Sticks and Practice Pad, Valve Oil, Slide Grease, Proper Mouthpiece for instrument, Cork Grease, Reed, Ligature, Cloth Swabs, Cleaning Kits, Cables, Rotor Oil, etc.

ACADEMIC, EFFORT, CONDUCT

- For instrumentalists and vocalists, all tests, worksheets, classroom evaluations, playing tests, and performance grades are averaged to produce an academic grade.
- For instrumentalists and vocalists, each performance is awarded a letter grade that is averaged into the academic grade for the grading period in which it was earned.
- Each student begins the grading period with a “1” in effort. Consistent failure to bring instrument and supplies or participate in daily classroom activities will lower the effort grade.
- Each student begins each grading period with an “A” in conduct. Consistent failure to adhere to the rules of conduct as outlined in this handbook will lower this grade. Other disciplinary consequences may also apply.

M-DCPS GRADING SCALE

<u>GRADE</u>	<u>SCALE</u>	<u>VALUE</u>	<u>INTERPRETATION</u>	<u>G.P. VALUE</u>
A	3.50-4.00	90%-100%	Outstanding Progress	4
B	2.50-3.49	80%-89%	Above Average Progress	3
C	1.50-2.49	70%-79%	Average Progress	2
D	1.00-1.49	60%-69%	Lowest Acceptable Progress	1
F	0-0.99	0%-59%	Failure	0
I		0	Incomplete	0

Students MUST maintain a Grade Point Average of 2.0 or better in order to participate in any field trips, Music Performance Assessments, or after school activity – including Marching Band as per Miami-Dade Schools Policy.

Students who have 10 or more absences and/or 20 or more tardies will not be permitted to participate in any field trips, Music Performance Assessments, or after school activity– including Marching Band as per Miami-Dade Schools Policy.

Section 6: Conduct

In order to maximize rehearsal time and to maintain the stability of the band and chorus, certain codes of conduct are emphasized. Students must understand that rehearsals are as a group, performances are as a group, and judgments are made of the group. The quality of the group will only be as good as its weakest member. The consequences for failing to adhere to any of the guidelines listed below may result in one or more of the following actions: detention, forfeiture of a performance spot, and exclusion from a performance. Repeated or deliberate infractions may result in one or more of the following: school referral and withdrawal from the class. For further information, please refer to the M-DCPS Student Code of Conduct.

CONDUCT AT REHEARSALS, PERFORMANCES, AND FOOTBALL GAMES

- Students will refrain from eating candy and chewing gum.
- Students will be permitted to visit the appropriate concession stand during football games.
- Students will refrain from talking and are expected to listen attentively while a director, instructor, chaperone or any officer is talking or giving directions.
- Students will stay until dismissed.
- Students are not to converse or associate with spectators at rehearsals or during performances.
- Students will refrain from arguing with one another.
- Students will refrain from using profanity or provocative language.
- Students will be instructed as to where to assemble in grandstand at all football games.
- All band members will participate in performing stands music or routines. No one is permitted to perform music or movement to any song unless prior approval is granted by the band director.
- Students are allowed to use the restrooms in groups of 3 or more.
- Talking is not permitted when the band is warming up or tuning in the stands.
- "Booing" is not good sportsmanship and is not permitted.
- No one is to stand during the game unless instructed.
- Always be aware of what is happening during the football game. Be ready for performance on short notice from the drum majors (particularly the 'Fight Song').
- Proper professional decorum is expected at all times. "Giggling" or inability to recover is unacceptable.
- Insubordination and defiance will not be tolerated.

CONDUCT DURING TRAVEL TO AND FROM PERFORMANCES

- Students are expected to meet at the time and place designated by their director.
- Students are expected to ride the bus to and from events unless the director grants special permission.
- Talking is permitted on the bus, yelling is not.
- Students will stay on the bus until dismissed.
- At some football games, students may be asked to keep windows up until the bus clears the stadium.
- Students are expected to follow all directions given by bus captains and chaperones.

CONDUCT IN THE BAND/CHORUS ROOM

Students, Teachers, Staff, Band Parents and Alumni have worked very hard to make sure we have a clean and working rehearsal space. It is every band and chorus member's responsibility to keep the room clean, organized, and to use it in the way it is intended. Any student caught or involved in the destruction, vandalism or misuse of the band facility or any equipment will face administrative action.

BAND ROOM

The use of band facilities before, after, and during school is a privilege. Students who abuse the facility will be disciplined accordingly. Any abuse or damage will be considered vandalism. **NO OUTSIDE STUDENTS ARE PERMITTED IN THE BAND ROOM** except for business with the director. There will be no horseplay, i.e. throwing of things, in or around the band room. All percussion and guard equipment is off limits to anyone not specifically designated to use it. No storing of personal items - **THE BAND ROOM IS NOT A LOCKER** and NO Food/Gum/Drinks are permitted in the band room. Bottled water is permitted.

BAND OFFICE

The band office is private and is not to be entered by any student without permission from the director or a staff member. Telephone use should be kept to a minimum and is not for personal use. Ask permission before using. **THE COMPUTER IS OFF-LIMITS!!**

ETHICS

- Students are expected to refrain from smoking, drinking alcoholic beverages, and using drugs or other mood modifying agents.
- Students are expected to care for personal property, the property of others and of the school.
- Band members are expected to act as a positive role model for all outside observers.
- Students will be given a 5-minute water break every 30 minutes, at a minimum; and no student shall be denied the right to remove themselves from any practice, rehearsal, or sectional, should they feel the need to rest and refresh themselves.
- Students shall be given a 30-minute lunch break during any practice, rehearsal, or sectional in which the length of said practice, rehearsal, or sectional is 4 hours or greater in duration.
- Any member who discredits the organization by his or her conduct or actions in band, class, on a trip, or on social media, shall be subject to dismissal from the band program.

CONDUCT ON TRIPS

- Students and their parents must attend a special trip meeting prior to departure.
- Special codes of dress and conduct will be discussed at the trip meeting.
- All paperwork involving parental consent must be completed prior to deadline.
- Financial obligations to the GBBPA shall be resolved prior to departure.

SECTIONALS

- All sectionals are to be considered an activity of the Band Program, and are therefore subject to the same rules and regulations as set forth in this Handbook.
- Failure to adhere to the regulations of this Handbook during any sectional, by any Officer or member, will be deemed a breach of conduct; and may result in the removal from Office, and loss of a performance spot in the show.

Section 7: Uniforms

Because of their design, the uniforms make being a band and chorus member just that much more special than other organizations. When required, the uniform is to be worn in its entirety. It is to be worn with pride and dignity. When you wear your uniform you are representing your school, the band, the community, the state of Florida and the traditions and honors earned by the members of the group before you.

There will be an inspection before every performance. Each member is to report for every turnout in complete uniform. Inspecting officers and directors will instruct you as to procedures. Inspection is a PASS/FAIL situation. You cannot "almost" pass inspection. If you fail inspection, you may be excluded from performing until you pass inspection.

It is each member's responsibility to obtain a complete set of uniforms. It is the student's responsibility to notify the band director of any financial condition that might preclude them from purchasing a uniform prior to the posted deadlines.

PRACTICE UNIFORM

- Color Guard students will wear their practice shorts and shirts for class and rehearsals.
- Shoes and shirts must be worn at all times.
- Sunglasses and hats that do not interfere with performing may be used for outdoor practice.
- On cold days, sweat pants and shirts may be worn over the practice uniform.

PEP/GAME UNIFORM

- Instrumentalists will wear black bibs, green jacket, show shirt, marching shoes, and long black socks for games.
- Instrumentalists will wear black pants (not shorts), marching shoes, and show shirts or polos for pep rallies.
- Color Guard will wear their competition uniform for the first half and the pep uniforms for the second half of games and pep rallies.
- A Guard member's hair must be up in ponytail with matching ribbon.
- Generally, pep uniforms are worn to school on days when there is a game or pep rally.
- Seniors and juniors may wear their own class ring with the pep uniform.

COMPETITION UNIFORM

- Instrumentalists will be issued a school-owned performance uniform. Students shall be responsible for keeping the uniform in good condition. Any damage to the uniform, beyond normal wear and tear, will be the responsible of the student to repair said damage.

- Upon return to school from a competition, instrumentalists must change out of their performance uniform and back into regular attire.
- Chorus members will wear their assigned uniform at all performances both on and off school property.
- Only clear nail polish is permitted.
- Jewelry (with the exception of very small studs for pierced ears) is not permitted.
- Instrumentalists without the correct style of marching shoe (as ordered from the Equipment Order Form) may not be allowed to perform.

CONCERT UNIFORMS

- Wind Ensemble and Jazz Band:
Boys: Custom Green Polo, Black Dress Slacks, Black Dress Socks, Black Dress Shoes.
Girls: Custom Green Polo & Black Dress Shoes.
- Chorus Men: White long sleeve button down dress shirt, Black vest, black dress slacks, black dress socks, and black closed-toe shoes.
- Chorus Women: Selected Black Dress, black dress shoes.

ORDERING EQUIPMENT

- All BOM instrumentalists and Color Guard uniform and accessory orders and deposits will be collected during summer GBBPA/parent meetings.
- Orders will not be collected or placed without payment. Payment for uniforms and accessories is non-refundable.

Section 8: Student Officers

A committee comprised of the directors, instructors and graduating senior officers selects officers annually. Students selected for an officer position are required to attend special leadership training seminars held during the summer. The selection process occurs in April/ May and candidates will be evaluated as follows:

- Complete typed application with copy of 3rd nine-weeks report card.
- Returning officer applicants will also be evaluated on past work.
- Applicants for Drum Major must attend a clinic and audition to be considered. These clinics will be announced in class or written on the board for those interested.
- Applicants for the position of Band Captain and Drum Major must prepare a speech for all band classes.
- Officers will be removed from their position for dereliction of duty, and/ or conduct and ethical violations.

Officers:

Drum Major: The Drum Major is the leader of a marching band. The drum major is responsible for providing commands to the ensemble regarding where to march, what to play, and what time to keep. The commands may be given either verbally, through hand gestures, using a whistle or a baton, or with a mace. Drum majors are responsible for leading the practices and

performances of the band. In addition, they serve as the liaison between the band director and the band. Drum Major must keep the band together and organized and leads by example.

Band Captain: The Band Captain is responsible for all aspects of rehearsal and performance within the brass, woodwind, percussion or auxiliary sections. The Band Captain has oversight over Section Leaders within their section and is responsible for ensuring an effective rehearsal and performance atmosphere for all band members. All captains work closely together to lift moral and enhance the feeling of unity and purpose of the band.

Guard Captain: The Guard Captain aids the Director with the success of the Color Guard. This officer is the primary student representative of the Guard. This officer promotes band and guard spirit, pride, and cooperation. Exemplifies high moral character and be a positive role model. They will work with the Band Captain to represent the program and keep all aspects performing efficiently and successfully. They will guarantee that the Guard Room is organized and clean. They will schedule and supervise Color Guard sectionals, supervise that non-guard members do not touch or utilize guard equipment, and assist the Band Parents Association with student fundraising.

Section Leaders: Section Leaders report directly to the Captain of their particular section. Their responsibilities include coordinating all sectional rehearsals and insuring that the members of their section know all of the basic technique and fundamentals for their instrument. The Section Leader is responsible for insuring that each member is following a regular routine of practice that will lead to improving performance throughout the season. Regular assessments of field and stands music will be expected and remediation is to be provided for any student not performing up to standard. Section Leaders will positively encourage each member of their section to work to their highest level of achievement.

Executive Quartermaster: The Executive Quartermaster keeps track of all inventories including but not limited to uniform items, instruments, and field equipment. It is the quartermaster's job to make sure everything has a place and that band members know where and when they may stow and collect their materials. It is not the quartermaster's job to clean up after the band. The quarter master sets his or her own schedule and band members must abide by it.

Quartermasters: The Quartermasters makes sure all equipment being hauled to and from games, competitions and events are loaded and unloaded safely and quickly. It is not the job of the Quartermasters to make sure YOUR equipment is loaded. Students are responsible for delivering and receiving their own gear. The Quartermasters is there to organize and expedite the Load-in and Load-out procedures. Quartermasters set their own schedule and students must abide by it.

Band Librarian: The Librarian is responsible for sheet music, method books, video and audio recordings, scrapbooks, and awards. It is the Band Librarian's job to make sure the library is archived and organized. They make sure students have access to sheet music, recordings, method books and what has been checked out and returned. It is not the job of the librarian to keep track of your folders.

Historian: The historian aids the Director in documenting all the history the BOM Band program and Color Guards creates. These officers will create a scrapbook or album of photos, clippings, funny moments, awards, and any other activities in which the band and/or guard

participates. They aid in putting together the monthly newsletter, and will promote school and band pride by making decorations, posters and signs; and will assist the band boosters with planning the band banquet.

Section 9: General Information

Parents responsibility to the band

It is the responsibility of every parent and guardian to see that the policies outlined in this handbook are followed and that the form in the back is signed and returned. Each parent is responsible for the attendance of his or her child at all band/chorus functions. It is the responsibility of each parent to see that his or her child practices their instrument at home on a regular basis.

Habits of Successful Band Parents

Show an interest in the musical study of your child. Arrange a regular time and a quiet place for your child to practice and do homework. Keep the instrument in good condition – and always have at least 3 reeds for saxophone and clarinet! Be careful with school-owned instruments – repair costs are high! If you are able to rent, lease-to-own, or purchase an Intermediate-level instrument for your child they will be able to use it for the next 10+ years! Please see Dr. Lussier for suggestions! Never leave an instrument in the car! Provide private instruction – see Dr. Lussier for a list of exceptional affordable teachers in the South Florida area. Double-check to make sure students have their instrument on the way to school, on the way home, and for the weekend. Feel free to visit rehearsals as often as you'd like (during the day or after school). Read all communications from the school and the band program. Attend meetings, concerts, football games, competitions, and special events. Become a level I or II chaperone. Encourage your child to participate in all fundraising activities! Ensure your child has the equipment, uniform, and supplies necessary for a successful musical experience. Volunteer at one or more events.

CONFERENCES

Students and parents who need to speak with the directors regarding personal concerns or student progress are requested to call the band office to schedule an appointment so that sufficient uninterrupted time can be scheduled. Parents are requested not to confer with the Band Director, or band staff about grades during rehearsals or performances.

BAND OF MYSTERY

Marching Band Practice: Monday & Wednesday 3:00-6:00 p.m. Rehearsals may have to be re-scheduled from time to time when Monday is a holiday. In most cases the rehearsal is moved to Tuesday 3:00 – 6:00 p.m. Information will be posted on the band website.

Green and Black Band Parents Association (GBBPA)

All parents and students are encouraged and expected to participate in this organization. Parent volunteers who have been nominated and elected as the Board of Directors by the general membership run the organization. All parents are considered members if their child participates in the Band of Mystery. The GBBPA functions as a parent booster club separate from Felix Varela Senior High School and publishes its own set of rules referred to as the

GBBPA By-laws. This organization is a recognized non-profit organization and charitable contributions are always welcome and necessary to have a successful year.

INSTRUMENTS

The band has a limited number of instruments for students to use. Students who play flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, or trombone may need to obtain an instrument from an outside vendor. Students are responsible for the care and maintenance of all instruments issued to them. Students are not permitted to touch, hold, loan, or play an instrument except their own. Instruments must be placed in the designated storage area with cases latched when not being used. Personal items, including mouthpieces, should never be left in instrument case while not in use. All instruments should go home daily. The band storage cabinets are for convenience only.

- Brass players will provide their own mouthpiece, oil, and cleaning cloth.
- Woodwind players will provide their own mouthpiece, ligature, swiper, and reeds.
- Percussionists need to supply their own mallets and beaters. All percussionists will be held accountable for the storing, securing, and maintenance of all school percussion instruments and mallets prior to and after every rehearsal. All percussion students must complete an instrument rental agreement prior to using any school equipment.

COMMUNICATION

Throughout the year, memos containing pertinent information are distributed to students. It is the student's responsibility to deliver these memos to their parents. E-mail will also be utilized. Please ensure that your e-mail address is current.

FUNDRAISING

The band and chorus program is an enormous vehicle that depends on funds from a variety of sources in order to function properly. Students are encouraged to share in the expense by **PARTICIPATING IN FUNDRAISERS!** To help meet the needs of the program and defray additional costs to the students, the GBBPA organizes and runs numerous fund-raisers throughout the year. Look for flyers, announcements, and newsletters that are periodically sent home and e-mailed describing current fund-raising opportunities. These activities are organized and supervised by parent volunteers associated with the band patrons' organization and not M-DCPS personnel. It should be noted that roadside sales or donations (a.k.a. "Highway Holdups") are strictly prohibited by the M-DCPS. Furthermore, students are not to hold signs in the median or near busy intersections. Students are **NOT** permitted to sell candy/chocolate on school grounds!

Felix Varela Band Student Awards

Service Awards

These awards are given for participation in the Band of Mystery. In order to be eligible to receive a service award, the student must be a 'member in good standing (Not currently failing a band course, and/or owing money to Felix Varela HS or the GBBPA. Note: This is strictly enforced).

Students must participate in all activities throughout the year.

1st year: band letter for letterman jacket

2nd year: pin for letter & chevron for letterman jacket

3rd year: personalized plaque & chevron for letterman jacket

4th year: personalized plaque & chevron for letterman jacket

Jazz Band: patch inscribed with year student was a member for letterman jacket

Merit Awards

Merit Awards are awarded to students who display superior musical skills and/or service to the band program. These awards are intended to recognize students who qualified as a "runner-up" for various specialty awards.

Specialty Participation Awards

These awards are reserved for students who are selected to perform in various honor bands and throughout the school year. These awards inevitably change from year to year depending in which programs Felix Varela students perform.

Best Section Award

This award is presented to the section of instrumentalists who have demonstrated the highest level of musicianship and teamwork in the BOM. The "best section" often has the very best overall attendance record in marching and concert band, a high level of musicianship, while reporting the least amount of conflicts. The "best section" will be inscribed on a permanent plaque on display in the band room.

Viper Pride Award

The Viper Pride Award is presented to one student per grade level who shows above average, or vastly improved dance or musical skill. The recipient must have an "A" average in band or dance classes, untarnished attendance record, a love for music or dance, and demonstrate actions that place the band program needs above their own.

Most Outstanding Award

The Most Outstanding Award is presented to one student per grade level who is recognized as a musician or dancer of the highest caliber for that level. The recipient must have an "A" average in band or dance classes, a superior rating at the district level for a solo or ensemble, impeccable attendance at all rehearsals and performances, and a passion for the art of music or dance. The recipient must also be an advocate of the band, often demonstrating personal sacrifice for the

benefit of the program. The recipient's name will be inscribed on a permanent plaque on display in the band room.

Outstanding Musicianship Award

Students who display exemplary music skills are eligible to receive special recognition for their talent and hard work. Students must receive a superior rating on a grade 6 or higher solo, and have been selected for at least one honor band.

Unsung Hero Award

This is presented to a band member that demonstrates unparalleled work to better the band program. In addition to demonstrating a basic competency as a musician or dancer, this student always performs jobs with the best interests of the band program in mind. Often this person works "behind the scenes" performing jobs that go unrecognized by other band members or the public.

Felix Varela Scholar Bandsman Award

This is presented to the graduating senior who maintains the highest G.P.A. Candidates must be enrolled in the school's marching and concert band program, maintain a minimum of a 3.0 G.P.A. (based on a 4.0 scale), and be planning to attend a college or university.

Color Guard Achievement Award

The recipient of this award is a student who demonstrates, by action, a lifetime commitment to the guard. This person exemplifies dedication and displays leadership qualities unparalleled to all other members. The recipient of this award is always professional and eagerly accepts the challenges associated with being a guard member. The recipient's name will be inscribed on a permanent plaque on display in the band room.

Louis Armstrong Jazz Award

This award is presented to a student enrolled in jazz band who demonstrates the highest level of musical skill in the jazz idiom. In addition to participating in all aspects of the band program, improvisatory skills are required. The recipient's name will be inscribed on a permanent plaque on display in the band room.

John Philip Sousa Award

The John Philip Sousa award is presented to the student who demonstrates superior musical and leadership skills. The student performs in all aspects of the band program and is well versed in a variety of instruments and musical styles. The recipient is usually a senior who is intent on majoring in music, preferably music education. The recipient's name will be inscribed on a permanent plaque on display in the band room.

National School Marching Award

The Director of Bands presents this award to a student who he/she believe is worthy of recognition for service and performance in the band program. Usually the recipient is a senior who demonstrates distinct service to the band program throughout their scholastic experience. There is often a "story" behind this individual, and the recipient stands out in a unique way earning

them distinguished recognition from the director. The recipient's name will be inscribed on a permanent plaque on display in the band room.

NOTE: Some of the Student Awards listed are for students who participate in BOM. Students that do not participate in BOM are not eligible for these specific awards.

Band of Mystery Booster Awards

Top Fundraiser Participants

This award is presented to the top fundraiser participants as identified by the GBBPA Vice President of Finance.

The Senior Band Video

Copies of the Senior Band Video are distributed to graduating seniors 'in good standing' (Not currently failing a band or dance course, and/or owing money to Felix Varela HS or the GBBPA. Note: This is strictly enforced) at no charge by the GBBPA in recognition for their dedicated service to the band program.

Outstanding Service

Certificates may be awarded by the band director or by the GBBPA to individuals who have served to promote the Felix Varela Band.

Dade Partner Award

This award is presented by the GBBPA to an individual in the business community who has served the band program throughout the school year.

Director's Achievement Award

The recipient of this award is recognized by the band director as the band parent whose unrequited support for the total band program helped propel the association.

Acknowledgement of Receipt of Band Handbook

Felix Varela Senior High School
Viper Bands Handbook

Please sign and return this page only to Dr. Lussier

We, the undersigned, acknowledge receipt of the Felix Varela Bands Handbook and agree to abide by the rules and requirements contained in it.

Student (Print Name): _____

ID# _____ Grade: _____

Student Signature Date

Parent / Guardian Signature Date