

Vero Beach High School Band

FBA Solo Ensemble Information 2012

Lincoln Park Academy – Ft. Pierce, Florida

General Schedule Friday – February 3

2:15 pm – Everyone Report to the Band Room
Load Truck & Busses

2:30 pm – Depart for Lincoln Park Academy

3:30 pm – Events Begin

Dinner on Your Own – Bring \$\$\$

9:00 pm – Report to Busses

9:15 pm – Depart for VBHS

9:45 pm – Arrive At VBHS – Dismissal

HAVE YOUR RIDE WAITING!

Due to the lateness of this event, some ratings may not be available until Monday. Judges sheets are not available until mid-week.

General Schedule Saturday – February 4

7:30 am – Everyone Report to the Band Room
Load Truck & Busses

7:45 am – Depart for Lincoln Park Academy

8:30 am – Events Begin

Lunch on Your Own – Bring \$\$\$

5:00 pm – Report to Busses

5:30 pm – Depart for VBHS

6:15 pm – Arrive At VBHS – Dismissal

HAVE YOUR RIDE WAITING!

Due to the lateness of this event, some ratings may not be available until Monday. Judges sheets are not available until mid-week.

Transportation to Festival

All students are required to ride with the band on the band bus to and from the festival. Special arrangements need to be made with the Band Directors in advance to travel otherwise. **There is an official VBHS**

Procedure and form for this. Students who do not follow the procedure will be referred to the administration.

Riding Home With Others

Students may ride home **only** after filing a **Family Transport Form** and checking out with the chaperone in charge. Forms are available in the band office, on line, in the back of the band handbook and will be available on site Friday and Saturday. **You must officially checkout with the head chaperone before departure from LPA.**

Sunday Dress Required!

All students will dress according to the bands traditional Sunday Dress policy. Personal grooming must be neat and professional with hair styled neatly and out of the face.

Ladies appropriate dress: nice dresses and dress shoes or nice dress blouse & long slacks (no Capri's or jeans) Ladies shoes must also be considered dress... any type of flip-flop or tennis / athletic shoe is unacceptable.

Gentlemen appropriate dress: including slacks with belt (no jeans), dress shoes (no tennis or athletic type shoes), socks, and dress shirts with tie.

Ladies, please keep make-up, jewelry, and hair styles conservative and appropriate to a formal performance.

We will remain in Sunday Dress at all times from arrival at festival until the return to the VBHS Busses for departure. **Note: Students who may have a concern with having the appropriate dress need to contact the band directors in advance for assistance. We do have items to loan out in case of need.**

Food & Spending Money

Lunch, Dinner, and Snacks will be on your own on at the concession stands which will have the typical fare such as soft drinks, hot dogs, chips and such.

Performance Department

Please report to your Judges' rooms at least 10 - 15 minutes early. Upon entering the room, please be very quiet. When the Judge acknowledges you, please politely introduce yourself and tell him/her what school you are with. Set up professionally, warm-up, and tune. Please respond to all instructions... yes sir or m 'am.

After the performance listen to the judge's comments and respond politely. Do not freak if you are asked questions or asked to play something again. Marking judges suggestions with a pencil is good and shows that you are interested in improving and learning. After you are done, please thank the judge for their time and their help. This goes a long way in final decision making on the part of the judge and sets a positive impression for you the next time or for other VBHS groups that may follow your performance.

Important FBA Solo / Ensemble Rules

1. You must provide an ORIGINAL score for an ensemble to the judge or an ORIGINAL solo part if the performance is a solo.
2. You may perform from a copied solo part.
3. Measures MUST be numbered.
4. Copies can NOT be made at the festival site...take care of this before you leave VBHS.
5. If you do not have a piano accompaniment for your solo, you may still perform for comments only.
6. If you are only performing certain movements, these must be according to the FBA music list and must constitute a significant portion of the selection at least 6 minutes... please inform the Judge of your cuts or movements to be performed. Ask your Band Directors for assistance if you are not sure.

VBHS School and Band Rules

Please remember that all school and band rules, policies, and traditions are to be followed at all times on the bus, and on the Lincoln Park Academy campus. There is to be no changing of clothes or dressing allowed on the busses.

Observing a Performance... Tips

Please consider all performances at this event as formal. Therefore, your deportment as an observer or listener should be professional and exhibit the very best manners and respect for the performers and others in the audience. Please sit up straight and do not talk during a performance. Polite applause is appreciated... no whistles, cat-calls, etc. Food and Drink in a performance is not appropriate. Congratulate others for their performance and be encouraging. FBA is not a competition between schools or individuals... good sports-man-like attitudes are expected from all. ***Observing at this event DOES NOT fulfill the performance review required for the semester.***

Ratings and the FBA Office

Ratings are posted 1 hour after performances. The FBA Office is off limits to all students and parents.

Cell Phone Policy

it is recommended that cell phones be left at school. If you choose to do otherwise, **cell phones are not allowed out of the bus parking lot at Solo / Ensemble as this is a performance situation.** Cell phones are not the responsibility of the band or school if lost or stolen from the bus. If a student is found with a cell phone off the bus, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. Students are well aware of the policy and should make arrangements for emergency situations before departure for festival. Cell phones will be available from Mr. Sammons, Mr. Howell, or one of the chaperones. If parents need to get in touch with a student, they may call the band cell phone: **(772) 532-9884**

DNAs (Did Not Appear)

This situation is not acceptable! All scheduled events are required to perform unless the DNA is approved in advance of the festival by one of the band directors for an acceptable reason. This performance is a significant performance grade for the nine weeks as each student must either perform in at least one ensemble at FBA or in one non-FBA ensemble to be scheduled by the band directors. **Surprise no shows are not acceptable and result in ZERO credit!**

Directions to Lincoln Park Academy

Take US 1 South towards Ft. Pierce (approximately 8 or 9 miles) Turn Right on N. 25th St. / Martin Luther King Blvd. (approximately 2.7 miles) Turn Left on Avenue M (Approximately ½ mile) Lincoln Park Academy is on the Left.

Entry Fee Reimbursement

VBHS has paid the entry fee for students to participate in this event. Any student who does not appear and perform at this event is responsible to VBHS for repaying the entry fee of \$7.50 per solo event they fail to perform in. Each individual member of any ensemble is responsible to VBHS for repaying the entry fee of \$7.50 individually per event they or their ensemble fails to perform in. This fee will be due by February 10th. Checks can be made to Vero Beach High School. Failure to reimburse VBHS for this fee will result in the student being placed on the official school obligations list.

There are NO early Busses or Shuttle Busses This Year!



Thoughts and Tips for Solo and Ensemble Success

Edited by J. Sammons

With Credits to William C. Miller, Gus A. Perry,
And Harry E. Grant

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- Remember to perform the music, not just the notes. Solo and ensemble judges are waiting to hear musical performances – not just a collection of notes with proper rhythms, but pieces performed with dynamic contrasts and phrases.
- Research suggests that students rehearsing five or more times with the accompanist experienced success more often than those who did not. It sounds so obvious, doesn't it? Nevertheless, all too often student performances are thrown together the week of the festival. Get a recording of the accompaniment and practice with it when possible.

In order to create a wonderful performance, there are a few “Musts”:

- You must have a beautiful and expressive tone. People will not enjoy hearing just flashy fast notes and no captivating sound.
- You must also have a solid technique or you will be left playing only the simplest of tunes forever.
- You must play in tune with yourself and with others.
- You must ask yourself, “What are you saying through your music?”

Regarding The Performance

Warm-up:

Use a big beautiful sound. Find a favorite simple melody, tune or scale and breathe a warm singing tone into your instrument. Feel the openness in your throat and facial cavity, the flexibility in your lips and the capacity of your breathing. Move on to descending ½ step pairs settling into your tone. Center and tune yourself with harmonic exercises and octaves slurs, etc... Gradually work your way into some fluid scales and arpeggios to warm up your fingers. Don't race hysterically around on your piece or waste time trying to compete and/or impress others in the warm-up room. Stay centered and focused on yourself. Breathe, Breathe, Breathe!

Intonation:

Tune carefully and with a full tone. It is meaningless to whisper out an “F or B Flat”. If you have a chance to tune beforehand with the piano you will be using that day, then you will only need to play a quick check when it is your turn. Otherwise, tune with your performance tone and give yourself a chance to blow out any “first-note” jitters, hear the piano and the room, breathe, and relax. You are about to have some fun. Remember to listen, listen, listen! You can make quick adjustments to your instrument during your longer rest periods in the piece if necessary. Learn about the intonation tendencies of your instrument. Keep your instrument warm before playing.

Tone:

Tone should be a living expression, not a static “electronic” sound. Control, clarity and flexibility are all important ingredients to a beautiful tone. Vibrato should not be constant and unrelenting. It must vary in order to create a truly expressive phrase. Your color, size and intensity should help to create atmosphere, mood and expression. Too much vibrato is the same as no vibrato at all.

Begin confidently and not apologetically. Project out over the heads of the audience and feel your sound bounce off that back wall. Better to begin perhaps a bit too fully than to choke out a tiny little blip. A good start will give you confidence and help you establish the flow.

Using expressive and appropriate tone colors and dynamics will create an enchanting performance. Draw the listener into the subtle nuances and shadings of your tone. Study how to change the shape, size and direction of your air column (or whatever applies to your instrument) in order to create colorful and meaningful phrases.

Rhythm:

Rhythmic accuracy, accents, meter and precision are all very important. Your interpretation depends on your ability to first play what is written accurately. How precise and even are your eighth notes, sixteenth notes and triplets...and how steady are you keeping the rhythm throughout? Practice with a metronome.

Technique:

Scales and technical studies are a must. They should be second nature and a fundamental building block for ease of technique in your solos. Do not learn your technique through your solos or band literature. Develop it fully in exercises and books designed for that purpose .. Be awake, alert and energetic when practicing. Set daily goals and play with a beautiful tone, slowly and accurately. Speed means nothing unless the sound is beautiful and even and the fingers are fluid and accurate. Command over these exercises will give extra confidence and security when you are in the stress and pressure of a performance.

Breathing:

Imagine breathing in the word "HO" backwards to help limit the noise of shallow breaths. It will help open and relax your throat. Try not to "sip" cold air into the mouth. Breathe deeply and quickly and get it down low into your body and out of the way. The "sipping" action will also contribute to that familiar "cotton mouth" we can experience during performances.

The ribcage should expand and remain lifted, not dropped. The head should be lifted as if by a puppet string pulling up from the top back of your head. This will help free your jaw for flexibility and control. This, in turn, helps to relax you. Do not jut the head forward or contort it in odd directions. Your eyes should glance down at the music while the head remains lifted. Practice good breathing exercises to develop endurance and comfort. Proper breathing is essential to all wind and brass players. Posture, position and balance of your instrument are all also crucial in keeping flexible and at ease in your performance. Breathe deeply and avoid squeezing your arms into your body. Open up the area around your torso and free your ribcage. Projection and power improve dramatically. Colors and tones will be greatly enhanced. Sustain fully through the last note of the phrase. Plan your breaths and mark them in your part. Don't leave it up to chance. You will end up taking more than necessary, grabbing them haphazardly and disturbing the phrase. The breath is part of the expression.

Interpretation

Bring the composers markings to life. That is your role as the performer and interpreter. First and foremost, follow the directions on the music well.

Play the music, not your instrument. It is the medium through which you are communicating. Who is the composer? When did he live? What period and style is the composition written? Listen to recordings and listen to other works of this composer. Bring the composer's intentions to life. That is what interpretation is, not what you think it should be. You have something to say with your piece. Figure out what that is, work to communicate it through the music and create a relationship with the listeners. That is the magic of music. You can say things that words or pictures cannot. Explore and have fun finding your way of doing that.

Phrasing is the art of shaping a melody. It is the ability to create a rise and fall or a tension and release as the phrase flows forward. Think of the melody traveling over the bar-lines. Your music must have a dynamic shape and flow otherwise; it is merely a mechanical exercise.

Piano Accompaniment and ensemble parts (i.e. trio, quartet, quintet, choir):

Know your piano part. It is essential to the understanding and interpretation of the piece. It isn't a last minute addition. Most of the time, students are limited by time and money for rehearsals with their accompanist, so listen to recordings and study the piano part. You need to know it well and understand how your part works with it. Also, know the other parts of your ensemble. You fit together like puzzle pieces. You certainly don't want to sound like individuals who start and finish together, but essentially played separately. Practice often, practice scales and intonation exercises together. Learn to blend with each other's sounds and work to create a unified interpretation and presentation. Plan your breaths to benefit the overall ensemble line.

Stage Presence:

Never tell with your facial expression or body language that something went wrong. Don't forget to wear your smile. You are happy to be offering your performance, no matter where or when. Be positive and make it your best. Let your hard work be the firm ground you can plant your feet in and the music will flow.

Stand away from your stand and place the stand so that its top edge is no higher than your shoulders. Your audience (or judge) wants to see your lovely face and hear your sound project out and over the stand. Never hide behind the stand. As with everything else I mention in this article, this all must be practiced before your performance.

Ensemble groups should seek advice as to the position and setup of each player. The proper stand placement and sharing of music parts, the correct order of the parts and the physical shape/setup will help to create the best ensemble sound and visibility among players.

Dress: Look the part of a performer. The type of performance (concert, audition, competition), time of day and the kind of audience will dictate the formality or informality of your dress. One should not be over-dressed or over-made-up for an audition or competition. You should be comfortable and have ease of movement. You are offering something special and therefore, should look respectable (not overly trendy either), neat and clean. Have respect for yourself as a performer and respect for your audience and or judge. Keep it simple, elegant and comfortable.

Florida Bandmasters Association
 Adjudicator's Comment Sheet
**WIND INSTRUMENT SOLO &
 ENSEMBLE**

Performer's Name _____ School _____
 Performance Time: _____ Judge: _____
 Date: _____
 Selection: _____

PERFORMANCE FUNDAMENTALS

- ___ Tone Quality
- ___ Intonation
- ___ Balance
- ___ Blend
- ___ Ensemble Sonority
- ___ Physical Articulation (circle one)

A B C D E

TECHNICAL ACCURACY

- ___ Note accuracy
- ___ Rhythmic Accuracy
- ___ Precision
- ___ Entrances
- ___ Release
- ___ Interpretive Articulation
- ___ Clarity of Articulation
- ___ Technique
- ___ Stability of Pulse
- ___ Dynamics Observed
- ___ Transitions (circle one)

A B C D E

MUSICAL EFFECT

- ___ Expression
- ___ Shaping of Line
- ___ Style
- ___ Interpretation
- ___ Phrasing
- ___ Tempo
- ___ Dynamic Expression (circle one)

A B C D E

Florida Bandmasters Association
 Adjudicator's Comment Sheet

PERCUSSION SOLO & ENSEMBLE

Performer's Name _____ School _____
 Performance Time: _____ Judge: _____
 Date: _____
 Selection: _____

PERFORMANCE FUNDAMENTALS

- ___ Tone Quality
- ___ Left Hand
- ___ Right Hand
- ___ Selection of Mallets
- ___ Physical Set-up
- ___ Tuning/Intonation
- ___ Balance
- ___ Ensemble Blend

(circle one)
 A B C D E

TECHNICAL ACCURACY

- ___ Note accuracy
- ___ Rhythmic Accuracy
- ___ Precision
- ___ Entrances
- ___ Releases
- ___ Interpretive Articulation
- ___ Technique
- ___ Stability of Pulse
- ___ Dynamics Observed
- ___ Transitions

(circle one)
 A B C D E

MUSICAL EFFECT

- ___ Expression
- ___ Shaping of Line
- ___ Style
- ___ Interpretation
- ___ Phrasing
- ___ Tempo
- ___ Dynamic Expression

(circle one)
 A B C D E