

# SALINE VARSITY BLUES HANDBOOK

## MISSION STATEMENT

- *To provide opportunities, in which, the students of Saline and its surrounding areas, develop their vocal and dance skills, while they enjoy the creative process of the performing arts.*
- *To promote pride and encourage cooperation, as part of a long-standing community organization.*
- *To provide affordable community entertainment that appeals to all age groups and varied styles of musical appreciation.*
- *Most of all, to realize the value of each Varsity Blues member, provide him/her encouragement and support, and recognize the strengths of every individual within our group.*

## GOALS

Being a Member of Saline Varsity Blues is a privilege. With this privilege, there are certain expectations and responsibilities. It takes hard work and dedication by all Members and their families to remain successful.

## OUR SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- To work with others** – Saline Varsity Blues Members should develop self-discipline, respect for those in authority, and demonstrate an ability to place group goals above individual accomplishments.
- To be successful** – In a society that is very competitive, people measure success in many different ways. Saline Varsity Blues believe you will be successful if you continually strive to do your best.
- To develop professionalism** – To accept direction and to treat fellow Members, Directors, parents and audiences with respect.
- To persevere** – Saline Varsity Blues Members need to develop a sense of loyalty to fellow Members, Directors, and most of all themselves.

## TIME COMMITMENT

Our rehearsal/performance season runs from the middle of September to mid-July. The group will have a break from mid-December until mid-January. However, any refresher rehearsals, fundraising or gig commitments that fall during this break must be honored.

## REHEARSALS

Beginning in September, regularly scheduled rehearsals will take place in the evening. There may be additional/make-up rehearsals. Additional rehearsals will be scheduled prior to performances/gigs and shows. The website calendar will have all rehearsals and up-to-date information posted in advance of any MANDATORY EVENT. Please check the website ([www.salinevarsityblues.org](http://www.salinevarsityblues.org)) often for information. The Board of Directors can be contacted at: [salinevarsityblues@yahoo.com](mailto:salinevarsityblues@yahoo.com).

## ATTENDANCE EXPECTANCY

Saline Varsity Blues Members are expected to be at all activities **on time**. We have strict policies regarding attendance. We believe these are fair and protect all of our Members. Like any performance ensemble, one person's absence has a negative impact on the group as a whole.

**(PLEASE REFER TO STANDING RULES FOR FULL ATTENDANCE POLICY)**

## SHOWS

**Holiday Show** – Performances of our Annual Holiday Show will be early to mid-December. **THIS IS A MANDATORY EVENT.** The Kids' and JV Casts from the previous Summer Show are invited to perform with Saline Varsity Blues. **All Saline Varsity Blues Members and families are required to participate in the production of the Show, including set-up/tear-down and monitoring of students.**

**Summer Show** – This is how we finish our year, with our biggest show and our best performances. **THIS IS A MANDATORY EVENT.** The Annual Summer Show will be mid to late-July. The Kids' and JV Casts will join us, creating an ensemble of over one hundred voices. Rehearsals are almost daily as the show approaches, and are quite intense. **The Summer Show requires every family to help weeks before the Show, with the Show set-up, and after the Show for Strike (our organized clean-up program).**

## FUNDRAISING

Saline Varsity Blues is supported by the volunteer efforts of our Members, families, and friends. **FUNDRAISER PARTICIPATION IS MANDATORY.** When fundraisers are announced, be sure to read all fundraising information carefully to determine when/how you will participate.

When fundraising schedules are provided, please be ready to volunteer your time when schedules are set. Every effort will be made to accommodate Members' schedules. **HOWEVER, MEMBERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR FINDING THEIR OWN REPLACEMENT IF SCHEDULED FOR A FUNDRAISING SHIFT THEY ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND.**

Fundraisers have been scheduled and this information will be provided in written form (usually in a folder with all contents provided by VB Board Members). As with all of our information, it will also be posted with deadlines on our VB WEBSITE ([www.salinevarsityblues.org](http://www.salinevarsityblues.org)). Questions about Fundraising can be sent to our VB email: [salinevarsityblues@yahoo.com](mailto:salinevarsityblues@yahoo.com) or to our Fundraising Coordinator.

## RETREAT

**RETREAT IS MANDATORY.** It is a time for learning and rehearsing performance programs for the year, workshops, and bonding with new and old members. Songs and dances will be learned and friendships will be forged. It sets the tone for the season, and it gives everyone the special feeling of belonging.

Retreat will take place towards the end of January. Fees for Retreat are included in the dues to be paid. Parent volunteers and food contributions are necessary to make this event a success, and your family will be asked to sign up for these in advance. **PLEASE VOLUNTEER FOR ONE OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS: TRANSPORTATION, FOOD/BEVERAGE, PAPER PRODUCTS, AND CHAPERONES (WILL BE SELECTED BY DIRECTOR).**

## PERFORMANCES/GIGS

We are frequently asked to perform at various events around the community from time to time. We will notify you as soon as possible when events have been scheduled. Again, it is essential that all Members are available to participate.

## TOUR

Each year Saline Varsity Blues goes on a performance tour, usually a week or two after school ends. Tour is a learning experience that always provides performance opportunities; it's also a chance to see and learn about different types of performances and shows. Among other cities, the group has performed in Toronto, New York, Boston, Chicago, Nashville and Disney World in Orlando. We are in the process of attaining tour information/costs for a few different venues, and will hold a separate Tour Informational Meeting, when complete.

While VB will pay for a portion of the expenses associated with tour, we estimate that you'll be responsible for payment of tour. This amount may be paid in a lump sum at any time or in three installments. Tour must be paid in full by deadline given, or Member will be unable to attend.

## FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS OVERVIEW

The financial commitment to Saline Varsity Blues covers our expenses. **We are a non-profit organization.** Saline Varsity Blues families having difficulty meeting the financial commitment should contact the Treasurer of the Board of Directors to work out a payment schedule. In some cases, there may be assistance available. The following is a brief overview of the financial obligation:

ANNUAL DUES RETREAT FEES, and UNIFORM DEPOSIT	To be determined by the Board of Directors. Payment in full is preferred at the Annual Meeting in September. Retreat fees and Uniform deposit are included in your Membership dues. If a payment schedule is necessary, please speak with the Treasurer. All dues should be paid in full by November 1st.
TOUR	Members' must pay for their own tour trip. Tour payments are due the first week of November, February, and April.
CASUAL UNIFORMS	A Holiday Show and a Summer Show T-shirt are <b>MANDATORY</b> , cost to be determined. Orders will be taken in April or May and payment is expected at the time the order is placed.
DESIGNATED SHOES	Dance shoes are <b>MANDATORY</b> for the safety and agility of VB dancers. Everyone is required to have <b>BLACK JAZZ SHOES</b> and ladies also require <b>BLACK CHARACTER SHOES</b> . These can be purchased at any dance boutique. <b>PARTICIPATION IN SALINE VARSITY BLUES WILL BE DENIED WITHOUT THESE NECESSARY SHOES.</b>
SWEATSHIRT	This garment is optional, cost to be determined. You will be notified when a sweatshirt order is being placed. If you choose to purchase a sweatshirt, payment is expected at the time the order is placed.
VB BUDDY GIFTS	It is recommended that any one gift not exceed \$5.00.

(PLEASE REFER TO STANDING RULES FOR FULL FINANCIAL OBLIGATION POLICY)

## GENERAL

### Conduct

Saline Varsity Blues Members are to represent Saline in an honorable manner at all times. Actions by a Member that violate any criminal laws, or the principles and Rules outlined in this Handbook, could be cause for discipline, and/or expulsion from Saline Varsity Blues.

- A. If a Member possesses or uses illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or any other controlled substance, s/he will face expulsion from the group.
- B. If a Member destroys any property that is not their own, s/he and their parent/guardian will be held financially responsible for damages.
- C. If a Member is convicted of committing a felony, s/he **will** face expulsion from the group.

It is the job of all Board Members to ensure that each Member of Saline Varsity Blues is following these rules. If a violation is reported, it is the obligation of Board Members to investigate the alleged violation and notify the Board of Directors and the VB Member's parent(s)/guardian(s) immediately. The VB Member and a parent/guardian will most likely be required to appear before the Board of Directors.

### Medical Information

Please inform the Director(s) and Board of Directors if you take medications or have a medical condition of which we should be aware. We spend a lot of time together, and we need to know about any possible problems that could arise. Medications should be given to the Director or VB Emergency parent to keep/administer during VB events, practices, tour, etc...

### VB Licensed Drivers

Saline Varsity Blues **does not** provide transportation to or from any event (except Tour). It is the responsibility of our Members and their parent/guardian. The Director, Emergency Parent, and Attendance Officer **will not** remain after an event (including rehearsal) to coordinate or provide transportation for any performer.

## **ATTENDANCE COMMITTEE**

The Attendance Committee will consist of the Attendance Officer, the Director, and the President of the Board of Directors, but may also consist of any one or all of the Members of the Board of Directors.

The Attendance Committee will assume the following duties/responsibilities:

- A. Conduct individual meeting(s) with any Member, and at least one parent/guardian, who are in violation of the Attendance Policy as stated in the Standing Rules.
- B. The Committee may impose probation, penalties, and/or recommend expulsion from the group as deemed necessary.
- C. Ensure consistency and equal treatment for all Varsity Blues Members.

A VB Member who is in violation of the Attendance Policy as stated in the Standing Rules and is called before the Attendance Committee, and/or the Board of Directors, will be subject to the following procedures:

1. Any one of the Board Members will verbally notify the VB Member.
2. A meeting before the Attendance Committee and/or the Board of Directors will be scheduled for the earliest convenient date.
3. A letter will be mailed to the VB Member and his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) informing them of the Attendance Policy violation and the date, time and location of the Attendance Committee meeting.
4. The VB Member and at least one parent/guardian must appear at the scheduled meeting. The Member and parent/guardian will be given the opportunity to speak.
5. The Attendance Committee and/or the Board of Directors shall reach a decision by majority of the Members present.
6. The VB Member and his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing, by mail, of the final decision of the Attendance Committee and/or the Board of Directors within seven days after the meeting.

## CHAPERONE GUIDELINES

All adults interacting or working with any VB Member will be asked to abide by the Chaperone Guidelines Conduct and Responsibilities form. This form is provided at the back of this handbook. We ask that you read and sign this form. It is to ensure both the safety of our Members and the adults working with them. Chaperone responsibilities are offered to Board Members first, followed by the parents of the senior cast, junior cast, etc.

## UNIFORMS & MATERIALS

You are responsible for the purchase of your own dance shoes, the Show T-shirts and any other necessary items not provided by Saline Varsity Blues, including a 3-ring binder to keep music organized and a writing utensil (pen/pencil) – for rehearsal. Uniforms ensure the group's professional appearance; one person's non-compliance can affect the onstage presence of the entire ensemble. Materials present and utilized allow for preparedness and demonstrate a commitment to progress.

### **NO MEMBER WILL BE ALLOWED TO PERFORM WITHOUT A COMPLETE UNIFORM (CASUAL OR FORMAL) NO EXCEPTIONS**

**Participation and preparedness (including rehearsal) are required to remain in 'good standing'!**

Formal uniforms and any portion of the casual uniform provided by Saline Varsity Blues will be distributed shortly after the Annual Meeting. The Uniform Coordinator will notify you of distribution dates/times. Uniforms will remain the property of Saline Varsity Blues and will be maintained by the Member while in their possession.

Members and their parents are responsible for the replacement cost or repair of the uniform if it is lost, stolen or damaged. A deposit, refundable upon return of the Member's uniform in good condition, will be collected at the Annual Meeting in September.

All uniforms that are the property of Saline Varsity Blues must be turned in at the end of the Summer Show at Strike or at the conclusion of participation. Each Member is required to return his or her uniform in the condition it was received.

If a Member fails to return his or her uniform, or returns it in unacceptable condition, the Member will be held financially responsible. Further Saline Varsity Blues participation will be denied until the uniform has been replaced or repaired at the Member's expense.

Formal attire includes the following:

Ladies: Blue dress, red dress, necklace and earrings

Gentlemen: Blue vest, red vest, black dress shirt, and black dress pants

## **VARSITY BLUES STANDING RULES**

### **Membership**

1. Saline Varsity Blues membership is limited to high school age students living in or around the Saline Area school district.
2. New Saline Varsity Blues Members will be selected by audition each year.
3. If you have terminated your membership, been placed on probation or have been expelled from the group, you will need to re-audition annually on an equal basis with other students auditioning to first become Members of Saline Varsity Blues.
4. The Saline Varsity Blues membership runs from late September of any given year to the conclusion of the July Summer Show the following year. All Saline Varsity Blues Members and their parent(s)/guardian(s) will be asked to renew their pledge to the organization, annually, by signing a contract.

### **Attendance**

- A. Saline Varsity Blues Member Responsibilities:
  1. The following are considered mandatory Saline Varsity Blues events/activities:
    - a. Retreat (January)
    - b. Tour (June)
    - c. VB Summer Show (July)
    - d. Production/Rehearsal Weeks (preceding Summer Show Week)
    - e. Summer Show Week including Strike
    - f. Fundraisers (Oct., Feb., Apr.)
    - g. Annual and Spring Membership Meetings (Sept. & April)

All REQUIRED DATES are posted on the website ([www.salinevarsityblue.org](http://www.salinevarsityblue.org)).

***A VB Member is automatically exempt due to religious conviction, severe injury/illness, funeral, or required school event (graded).***



2. Saline Varsity Blues Members are expected to arrive early: at least 5 minutes for rehearsals, at least 1 hour for performances, gigs or other mandatory activities, in order to be ready to perform.
3. If participation becomes impossible for any event (including rehearsals), Members must notify the Attendance Officer within 12 hours of the event, in order to be excused from, to arrive late, or to leave early from, any rehearsal, performance, gig or mandatory activity or event. **This notification will be submitted to the Board at monthly meeting, to be placed on record.**
4. If a Member misses a rehearsal, it is the Member's responsibility to the group to call someone and learn what was missed.
5. If a Member desires to be in one or more numbers and knows he or she will be absent when the number(s) will be rehearsed, the Member must prove to the Director(s) that he or she knows the number(s). Participation in the number is then at the Director(s)' discretion.
6. Saline Varsity Blues Members should arrange work hours around regularly scheduled rehearsals, performances, gigs or other mandatory Saline Varsity Blues activities or events. **Work as an excuse for absence will not be excused, if repeated incidents occur.** It will be documented (as with any other excuse for an absence), and reported to the Board of Directors, monthly. This could potentially affect a performer's standing in the group.
7. Saline Varsity Blues Members and their parent(s)/guardian(s) are expected to participate in **all fundraising events**. Failure by the Member or his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) to do so will be considered an unexcused absence for the Member. Each member will be given the opportunity to select the shift/time that s/he would prefer to work. All efforts will be made to accommodate special shifts/times requested. However, if assigned time is not possible, each member is responsible for finding a replacement for their scheduled work times. Excused absences could include an illness, or any other unforeseen circumstance, which should be emailed to the salinevarsityblues@yahoo.com, prior to the event. Tardiness or early departure during scheduled fundraiser work time by either the Member or their substitute, without prior arrangement, will be considered an unexcused absence for

the Member. **An unexcused absence will be reported to the Board of Directors, monthly.** This could affect a Member's standing in the group.

B. Saline Varsity Blues Attendance Member Records

1. The Saline Varsity Blues Director(s) will take attendance at every scheduled rehearsal, performance, gig or mandatory activity or event.
2. The Saline Varsity Blues Director(s) will maintain an ongoing attendance record, including stated reasons for Members' absences, tardiness and early departures.
3. The Attendance Officer will provide these attendance sheets for review by the Board of Directors, monthly.

C. Attendance Consequences

1. Attendance will be heavily weighed when casting small groups and solos.
2. When a Member misses a rehearsal, performance, gig or mandatory activity or event, and has not complied with the procedure A.3 above, it will automatically be considered unexcused.
3. When a Member arrives late or leaves early from a rehearsal, performance, gig or mandatory activity or event, and has not called the Attendance Officer, the tardiness or early departure is considered unexcused.
4. Any Member who misses any mandatory event or activity, or who indicates the intention to miss any event or activity after signing the Contract, may be subject to immediate review by the Attendance Committee and/or the Board of Directors.
5. After 3 unexcused absences, the Member will be subject to immediate review by the Attendance Committee and/or the Board of Directors.
6. Review by the Attendance Committee and/or the Board of Directors involves a mandatory meeting with the Member and at least one of his or her parent(s)/guardian(s). *(Please refer to the handbook under "Attendance Committee" for a further description on this Committee's responsibilities).* This may result in the establishment of the Probationary Guidelines

(in this section of the Standing Rules) or immediate expulsion from the group. The consequences imposed will be at the discretion of the Attendance Committee and/or Board or Directors. The Member and his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing, by mail, of the final decision within 7 days after the meeting.

### **Probationary Guidelines**

- A. The Attendance Committee and/or the Board of Directors will help the Member to re-examine his or her commitment to the group, and list specific expectations for improvement. These expectations can be tailored to the Member's individual circumstances, at the discretion of the Attendance Committee and/or the Board of Directors. Thereafter, the Member's attendance situation will be carefully monitored to make certain these expectations are being met.
- B. The Member and his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing, by mail, of the Attendance Committee's and/or the Board of Directors' final decision within 7 days after the meeting.
- C. If a Member does not meet the specific expectations established for such Member, he or she is subject to immediate expulsion from the group.

*Attendance Policy only: adopted 4/92, revised 8/94, 2/96, 11/96, 2/97, 3/98, 8/99, 10/02, 8/07, 9/10*

### **Behavior**

- 1. Saline Varsity Blues Members are expected to behave in a manner that allows for efficient and orderly rehearsals, performances, gigs or any mandatory activity or event.
  - A. Any Member disrupting rehearsals, performances, gigs or any mandatory activity or event is subject to warning from the Director(s) or other representative in charge.
  - B. Upon the second warning in the same rehearsal, performance, gig or mandatory activity or event, the Member will be required to "sit out", i.e., remain at rehearsal though not participating.
  - C. After being required to sit out, Attendance Officer will be notified, if this happens more than once an unexcused absence will be recorded and reported to the Board of Directors, which could result in a suspension from any/all VB functions until review or meeting with Member and his/her parents.

2. Behavior at Saline Varsity Blues social events, Retreats and Tours will comply with the law. Members shall conduct themselves with consideration for others at all times. Members shall follow all rules established for a specific event.
3. When Saline Area school facilities are used, Members must follow all school rules and treat all school property with respect. If a Member destroys any property that is not their own, the Member and their parent(s)/guardian(s) will be held financially responsible for the damages.
4. Members are expected to be cooperative, thoughtful, and respectful and to put forth their best effort.
5. Behavior not connected with, but reflecting negatively on, Saline Varsity Blues, may make the Member subject to immediate review by the Board of Directors.
6. Review by the Board of Directors involves a mandatory meeting with the Member and his or her parent(s)/guardian(s), and may result in the establishment of the Probationary Guidelines or immediate expulsion from the group. The consequences imposed will be at the discretion of the Board of Directors. The Member and parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing, by mail, of the final decision within 7 days after the meeting.

## **FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS**

1. Saline Varsity Blues Members shall be charged yearly dues, the amount to be determined annually by the Board of Directors.
2. Dues shall be payable to "Saline Varsity Blues" and given to the Treasurer of the Board of Directors in one installment at the Annual Meeting, or in a 'payment plan' as agreed upon by the Treasurer and Member/Parent. Members will not be allowed to participate until dues are paid and all official paperwork has been received.
3. Members are expected to purchase their own designated shoes.
4. Any uniforms purchased from the Saline Varsity Blues budget are the property of Saline Varsity Blues and must be maintained in good condition or the Member shall be held financially responsible for their repair or replacement.

## **Financial Consequences**

1. Parent(s)/guardian(s) who are delinquent in meeting any financial obligations will receive a reminder letter from the Treasurer of the Board.
2. If payment remains delinquent after the reminder letter has been received, the Member will be suspended from all Varsity Blues sponsored activities (including rehearsals, gigs, performances, Tour, Retreat and social events) until the financial obligation has been met.

Standing Rules adopted 4/92, revised 8/94, 11/96, 2/97, 3/98, 10/02, 9/10, 3/12