

# Blue Valley Northwest Dazzler Dance Team Handbook

Revised 2011

**I. PURPOSE:** To support and represent Blue Valley Northwest at athletic functions and assemblies as well as serve the community with their time and talents, the Dazzlers strive to maintain the superior level of performance they have set both on the team and in the classroom.

**Team philosophy:** With team unity, we will uphold our reputation by being responsible and respectful; with teamwork, we will make each performance a step up from the last.

**II. ATTAINING and MAINTAINING MEMBERSHIP:** All members and candidates must be familiar with this document as well as the Blue Valley District Dance Team Guidelines. Members of the BVNW Dazzler Dance Team must comply with all rules, regulations, procedures held by both the school and the district.

**A. Dazzler Behavior:** Members are expected to adhere to the following behaviors:

1. Have a **POSITIVE** and **RESPECTFUL ATTITUDE** toward fellow teammates, team officers, team coach, administrators, school faculty/staff and other athletes/students from all schools. Avoid complaining. If an issue arises, inform a captain or a coach.
2. **ACTIVELY participate** in all organized team activities.
3. **Perform appropriately on and off the team as well as in and out of school.**
4. **Understand/accept** that all members are equal, regardless of class or any other factors (including officers). Show teamwork and respect when working with other teammates and/or the coach.
5. **Understand** and **uphold** the standards of the team and the established strike system. **Meet/exceed** all deadlines and expectations assigned by the coach/captain(s) at **ALL** times!
6. **Eliminate “trash talk”** and **gossip**...confront problems/concerns head on!
7. **REFUSE** *any and all behaviors regarding drugs and alcohol (including cigarettes)* such as possession, usage, or any other behavior which may reflect negatively on the individual involved or team.

**B. KSHSAA GUIDELINES:** Member must adhere to or exceed the eligibility standards of the Kansas State High School Activities Associations (KSHSAA) *in order to audition for the team.* **NOTE: BVNW coaches have higher expectations for members once team has been selected. These expectations go into effect during the school year of active membership** (see IV. Strike System).

1. Pass 5 subjects with a “D” or above in the preceding semester
2. Be enrolled in 5 new subjects during membership
3. Have a 2.0 grade point average or better during the quarter preceding try-outs or a cumulative grade point average of 2.0.
4. Maintain the 2.0 minimum during membership; failure to maintain grades will result in one quarter of probation. If the GPA isn’t raised during that time, the member will be dismissed from the team.
5. Each member must have a valid, properly signed, physical examination form on file in the office **prior to the first participation following selection to the team.** The physical examination must be taken **AFTER May 1<sup>st</sup>** each year to provide eligibility for the following year. **Forms will be made available once team selection has been made.** *\*Coach requires TWO copies (one to be kept on file with the office and the other for team records).*

**C. Substance Abuse Policy:** Members must sign and adhere to the Blue Valley Northwest and Blue Valley District Substance Abuse Policies. **Forms will be made available once team selection has been made.** *\*Coach requires TWO copies (one to be kept on file with the office and the other for team records).*

**D. Membership Logistics:** Total membership of the Dazzlers will be determined by the dance team coach and school administration through a scored selection process. Selection is based on teacher recommendations and flag/dance evaluations.

1. Candidates must have **SEVEN** teacher recommendations from their current school year's classroom teachers. **FOUR** must come from teachers in the core academic areas; the remaining three may come from any class taken **during the current school year**.

\*\*\*Returning members must include the Dazzler head coach as one of the three "other" teachers they select. **Teacher recommendations count for 30% of the total score.**

2. Candidates will be judged in categories relating to the flag, kick, and dance routine as well as flexibility and overall performance impression. **The dance/flag evaluations count for 70% of the total score.**

**E. Selection Process:** Members must try-out EACH school year. Re-selection is not guaranteed. Refer to the Blue Valley District Guidelines for complete eligibility information. All candidates and returning members **MUST** comply with the information below.

1. Attend the mandatory informational meeting with a parent or guardian.

2. Complete all required forms by the announced deadline.

a. Candidate Verification Form (distributed at the mandatory information meeting, **turned in at the first clinic**); in signing the Candidate Verification Form, candidates and parents agree to abide by school, district, and KSHSAA policies. Be advised, this form includes a GPA CHECK which must be verified by a school counselor.

b. Teacher Recommendation Selection Form (distributed and **turned in at the mandatory information meeting**). Candidates will distribute their own recommendation forms—the forms themselves are to be returned directly to the coach by each respective teacher.

3. Attend the clinics and open gym. Though attending all clinics is not mandatory, **attendance is HIGHLY recommended at all three clinics as new material will be taught and reviewed at each.**

a. Though skills/technique are incorporated into all material, candidates *may* be asked to choreograph a brief segment during the clinics. All candidates have the opportunity to learn:

-Flag routine

-Dance Technique and Specific Skills

-Dance routine(s) involving a variety of styles (i.e. hip-hop, jazz, kick, etc.)

b. Candidates should feel free to bring a BLANK CD (with their name on it) to record the music so they may practice at home; however, music will **ONLY** be recorded at the first clinic. CDs will be returned to candidates by the second clinic.

c. Attire at clinics and try-outs is to be tasteful and appropriate. Wear appropriate shoes and **NO jewelry** (aside from watches). **Returning members should NOT wear ANY Dazzler attire at the clinics, open gym, or try-outs, PERIOD.**

d. For the actual try-out, candidates should wear:

-Black shorts or pants (solid black, if possible)

-White t-shirt or a wide-strap tank top (plain as possible—NO tummies!)

-Appropriate athletic or jazz shoes (jazz shoes are RECOMMENDED!)

-Hair pulled away from face (ponytail is preferred, if possible)

**-ABSOLUTELY NO JEWELRY**

**-Repeated for Emphasis: ABSOLUTELY NO Dazzler attire may be worn**

e. **VIDEO TAPING and SPECTATORS are NOT allowed during any part of the try-out process (clinics or formal try-outs).**

4. **SENIOR MEMBERS DIRECTLY** assist the coach with ALL try-out choreography, planning, and administration. Failure to appropriately assist in the selection process may result in strikes or loss of Spring Show performance privileges. **Should the squad contain no senior members, the coach will coordinate ALL try-out material and activities.**

**F. ATTENDANCE:** ON TIME attendance is mandatory at **ALL** organized team activities including: games, performances, practices, meetings, and fundraisers. **“On Time” can be defined as arriving FIVE minutes prior to the designated call time. “On Time,” in regard to practice, means stretched and ready to go!**

Excessive absences of any kind from mandatory activities may result in benching or dismissal from the squad; if a member misses OVER HALF of a team event, it will count as an absence

(excused/unexcused depends on the nature of the absence, see next page for more information)

**Note: Absences and tardies run on a semester basis; each semester starts with a clean slate.**

1. If a member is unable to attend an event, the **TEAM SECRETARY** MUST be notified **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**. Conflicts which are known farther in advance should be brought to the secretary’s attention as soon as they are known.
  - a. Notification of absence must be received **within 24 hours** of a scheduled **performance**. If a member must be absent due to a sudden illness or emergency, the secretary needs to be informed as soon as possible.
  - b. Notification of absence must be received **within ONE hour of a scheduled practice—NO EXCEPTIONS except sudden illness**. However, for **EARLY morning or first hour practice, 15-30 minute notification will suffice**.
  - c. If the secretary is unreachable, call/text a/the captain. If a/the captain is unreachable, call/text the coach. **In all cases, LEAVE A MESSAGE**.
  - d. If **PRIOR** notification is not given, the absence will be counted as **UNEXCUSED**. (see IV. Strike System).
2. The following are **EXCUSED** absences (though member or parent/guardian still **MUST notify the TEAM SECRETARY PRIOR to the absence unless it was sudden or unplanned**):
  - a. Illness—**If MORE than two events are missed, a doctors’ note is required upon return**. Note: NOT FEELING WELL and ILLNESS do NOT mean the same thing!
  - b. Family emergencies
  - c. Religious observances
  - d. Family vacations/trips NOT conflicting with either summer camp (dance or band) or any performances. Exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis and must be discussed with the coach **OUTSIDE** of practice. It is **CRUCIAL** to **TRY** to plan around the team calendar.
  - e. Mandatory school related absences. **Members must notify the secretary, captain(s), and/or coach at least ONE day prior for absence to be excused...see below!**
  - f. **UNAVOIDABLE** appointments—PLEASE try to schedule orthodontist, doctor, and other visits at a different time.
  - g. **UNAVOIDABLE** obligations (church, dance class, etc.) as long as members have tried to compromise/negotiate their time; flexibility on the Dazzler end is possible as long as there is some give on the other. Members should **ALWAYS** try to split time between team events and outside commitments.
3. The following are **UNEXCUSED** absences (NO EXCEPTIONS!):
  - a. **WORK**—members receive a calendar with **AMPLE** time to notify their employers
  - b. Other School Activities **NOT** discussed in advance with coach (as per district guidelines, Dance team is a **PRIMARY** responsibility. Flexibility is possible, but participation in outside activities/sports must be subject to the constraints of the dance team program expectations.)
  - c. **SOCIAL** activities (parties, trips, dances, dates, concerts, etc.)
4. Members will be automatically **BENCHED** from performance after **FOUR** excused absences and **TWO** unexcused absences **PER SEMESTER** (see IV. Strike System).

5. Tardies are counted **TWO minutes** after the designated call time. Members who leave practice early will also receive a “tardy” (since there is not a more definitive word) **ONLY** if they are leaving for reasons that would fall under the category of an unexcused absence, see above.

a. Members get **THREE** tardies before receiving a strike (see IV. Strike System).

b. Members **MUST** notify the secretary of ALL TARDIES prior to an event’s designated start time, not after; **an unreported tardy will count as TWO.**

c. If a member experiences an uncontrollable accident, NOTIFY the secretary, captain(s), or the coach as soon as possible. **Certain circumstances will be excused ONCE (oversleeping, car wouldn’t start, or other uncontrollable accidents).**

6. Because the last practice before a performance is CRUCIAL, the coach will decide whether the member is able to perform or not if a member is absent from that practice.

7. **If a member is ill enough to miss class, the member is certainly not well enough to perform.**

A member *should be* in attendance for **THE ENTIRE SCHOOL DAY** in order to perform unless absence is due to a scheduled appointment which has been given **coach (and if necessary administrative) approval**. Extenuating circumstances will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

NOTE: A minimum **half day attendance** the day of a performance (or day prior to if event is on a weekend) is a SCHOOL RULE (FOUR periods on a Trad Day, TWO on Block Day). However, half days should only be taken due to EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES.

8. If a member misses first hour practice but then comes to school later in the day, that member **IS REQUIRED** to see **THE COACH** to explain the absence before the end of that school day—**NO EXCEPTIONS. Failing to meet with the coach will automatically result in an unexcused absence from the first hour practice.** Absence will only be excused if it fulfills the above criteria for an excused absence **as long as** member meets with coach as explained above.

9. If a member attends first hour practice, that member **must stay at school for the remainder of the day** unless falling suddenly ill after practice or having a scheduled appointment. **If the member is well enough to attend dance team, the member is certainly well enough to attend class.**

**III. Officer positions:** Positions are open to any member who has had a **MINIMUM** of one year’s experience on the team. (NOTE: available positions may vary from year to year).

**A. Captain Expectations**—Captain(s) are expected to attend ALL designated meetings and choreography sessions as well as **meet/exceed all membership responsibilities/standards. FAILURE** to meet **ANY** of the expectations below may result in forfeiture of position.

1. **Be responsible for team discipline and morale; act as a POSITIVE influence and be a continuous example for others to follow, in and out of dance team and school.**

2. **Establish goals** with coach and other officer(s); implement activities to achieve these goals.

3. Be a **LIAISON** between the team and the coach regarding questions, problems, and other issues.

4. **Assist coach** in command of the team during all activities and in maintaining strike records.

5. **Work with the coach and independently** on activities including choreography, music/prop/costume selection, performance/practice schedule, etc.

6. Demonstrate **appropriate leadership** at **ALL times** (First to arrive, last to leave, etc.)

7. **Organize and direct** all squad performance behavior (“in stands”) and regulate uniform inspection.

8. Oversee the activities of the secretary and report and problems to the coach

9. Fulfill all other duties assigned by coach

**B. Captain Selection:** Captain(s) are determined by the following established procedure:

1. **Written responses OR an interview;** this aspect will be decided on each year depending on what the outgoing senior captain(s) deem fit.

2. **Choreographing** a short dance to perform in front of team and coach to music selected by the coach which will be 40 to 64 counts total. Candidates will receive music a week or several days **prior to** Captain Selection Week. Show & Tell will occur during the latter portion of Selection Week.
3. **Teaching** of a short portion of the aforementioned dance to team. (2 to 4, 8-counts ONLY) Teaching will occur during the latter portion of Captain Selection Week following Show & Tell.
4. Confidential team **vote** (current or previous team) based on the aforementioned criteria occurring on FRIDAY of Captain Selection Week. **Coach vote(s) is weighted as double that of each member vote.**
5. The FINAL DECISION is determined by the coach. Although the coach will take into **HEAVY** consideration outcome of the team vote, the coach, as well as any assistant coach, will make the FINAL decision. **Coach will consider each candidate beyond the essay, choreography, and teaching (prior behavior) when reaching the final decision.**

**C. Secretary Expectations**—The secretary acts as the attendance bookkeeper for the squad to alleviate some stress from both the coach and the captain(s). FAILURE to maintain records or personally follow the designated attendance policy may result in forfeiture of position.

1. Keep track of squad attendance and tardiness at all organized events.
2. Inform captain(s) and/or coach of excessive tardiness/absence.
3. Act as a model of good attendance and promptness.
4. Fulfill all other duties assigned by captain(s) and coach

**D. Secretary Selection:** Secretary is determined by the coach and captain(s) each year.

**IV. Strike System:** Coaches and captain(s) may give out strikes; however, captain(s) must verify strikes with the coach before giving them out. The coach will maintain strike records. Members will be individually notified when a strike is received and will be given a clear explanation for the strike.

**NOTE:** ANY situations *not* specified in the below Strike System will be handled by the coach and, if appropriate, the captain(s). These situations may include: classroom/social situations, school attendance, drinking/drug use, etc. This policy is designed to maintain team integrity and excellence.

**Like attendance, strikes start over each semester.**

**A. ONE STRIKE** will be given for the behaviors or actions listed below. When a strike is given, the member will have a private conference with the coach which may include any other members directly involved in the incident. The member will then sign the strike notebook. Parents will not be notified unless it is deemed necessary by the coach.

1. Neglecting to hand in any required forms by the specified deadline.
2. Late THREE times (TWO minute grace period)
3. Inability to meet **announced** deadlines including: fees, uniform check-in, choreography, CDs, etc.
4. Blatantly incorrect attire at **practice, school, or performance** (small errors are forgivable; not being prepared or properly costumed is inexcusable)
5. Showing **ANY** sign of disrespect to the coach, captain(s), another member, any BVNW students, faculty, or staff, or any one from another school or team. Signs of disrespect include the following: not displaying “Dazzler behavior,” talking back, excessive talking or off task behavior during practice, talking at all during performance, mocking of anyone connected to the team or the school, failing to follow directions, gossiping, online bullying or gossiping, etc.
6. Inappropriate conduct when in Dazzler attire. Such conduct includes: vulgar language, negative attitude, or inappropriate public behavior of any kind. **This also includes wearing Dazzler attire at undesignated times or lending it to non-members.**
7. Leaving equipment/props on the field, floor, or any other inappropriate place.
8. Not offering to assist with equipment preparation or storage **on a consistent basis.**

9. **Failure to maintain “C”s in ALL classes.** Members will be **benched** if at any point if ANY grade falls below a 70%. As soon as members demonstrate a raised grade (*signed teacher note or progress report*), that member may dance. However, members will ONLY receive ONE STRIKE on a first offense *despite* the automatic benching.

**B. SECOND STRIKE** is given if any of the above behaviors continue **OR** for any of the behaviors outlined below. At this point, an **AUTOMATIC BENCHING** will result and continue until the behavior has been discussed and changed. Parents/guardians will be notified by letter and/or email if this occurs.

1. FOUR excused absences or TWO unexcused absences **per semester**
2. First instance of IN or OUT of school suspension.
3. First drug/alcohol offense as outlined by the district and school policies

**C. THIRD STRIKE** is given if any of the above behaviors still continue **OR** for any of the behaviors outlined below. At this point, **IMMEDIATE DISMISSAL FROM THE TEAM** will result. Parents and administration will be notified. Member will be expected to return all items belonging to the school and pay any remaining fees IMMEDIATELY.

1. FIVE excused absences or THREE unexcused absences **per semester**
2. Second instance of IN or OUT of school suspension.
3. A second drug/alcohol offense as outlined by the district and school policies
4. **Failure to adhere to the previously outlined KSHSAA academic eligibility standards will result in an automatic third strike (see II. B. KSHSA GUIDELINES).**

## **V. PRACTICE and FIRST HOUR CLASS**

**A.** Members must be enrolled in first hour class for the entire academic year, but members earn grades during first semester only. The class follows the district curriculum for dance.

**B.** Because dance team is a class, it should be treated just like any other class. Members must **attend**. Members must do **homework** (i.e. individual practice, choreography, deadlines, etc.). Members must meet **all requirements**. Any deviation from these expectations could result in a strike and prevent a member from performing, lettering, or even passing.

**C.** Appropriate equipment, attire and attitude are expected. Members must always have the designated shoes and other attire. Generally, members may wear what they wish. However, on certain days, required attire will be designated and members are expected to wear requested apparel.

**D.** Members are to visit teachers at times other than established practice times if at all possible.

**E.** If a member cannot **participate** during practice due to injury or illness **a signed note** from a parent/guardian or, preferably, a physician is **required**. A missed practice could affect a member's opportunity to perform due to the instances of choreography changes, setting formations, etc. Coach and captain(s) will make final decisions on performance ability should this issue arise.

**F.** All practices are closed to the public.

## **VI. SUMMER**

**A. Summer camps** (both dance and band/flag) are **MANDATORY**. Dates are distributed at first official team meeting. Therefore, **ALL MEMBERS** are expected to attend the specified camps. Exceptions will be made on a case-by-case basis and must be discussed with the coach as soon as conflicts arise and **will largely be for those who have trips planned prior to dates being announced**.

**B. Summer practices** are mandatory unless a member has a prearranged family vacation or other **approved** obligation. Dates are distributed at first official team meeting.

**VII. UNIFORMS AND FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS:** Members are issued several school uniforms and, at times, props. These items need to be cared for and may require professional dry cleaning at the expense of the member if requested by the coach. **SPECIAL CARE should be given to all uniforms and costumes when cleaning to retain color and fit.** **NO** alterations/additions to uniforms issued by the school should be made without explicit permission from the coach. **Members are responsible for the items checked out to them, period. Each member will be charged or required to replace any items returned in poor condition as determined by the coach.**

“Out of pocket” expenses for individual members in past years are outlined below. \*Indicates items which may need to be purchased independently by members—**DO NOT purchase ANYTHING until the coach/captain(s) have given explicit instructions!** Non-asterisk items are ordered by the coach.

Summer camp fee—due before camp	\$100-180 (varies yearly)
Marching Band fee—due at the band picnic	\$125
Competition and/or other Team Trip	\$150-350 (varies yearly)
Dance team bag for travel/equipment	\$30-45
T-shirts	\$50-75
Dance Shoes	\$15-20/pair (approx. 2-3 pairs)
Miscellaneous attire—costumes, team gear, accessories etc.	\$150-300
Spring Show photos	\$55
Additional solo or ensemble competition dances	\$25-75 (optional)
*Sister gifts—for special events throughout the year	\$50-75 total for the year
*Misc. items—bobby pins, hair spray, ponytail holders, etc.	\$10-20
*Hosiery—flat tights/black tights/fishnets	\$15-20/pair (approx. 3-5 pairs)
*Socks, sports bras, strapless bras, bloomers etc.	\$75-150

**NOTE:** Figures are rounded *approximations* as prices tend to shift annually; figures are rounded up as well. Uniform requirements and prices will vary slightly each year. **To help keep costs down, it is expected that each member contribute to team fundraising efforts.**

**Financial constraints should NOT inhibit anyone from trying out. Payments can be spread out for members’ convenience. All financial matters will be handled confidentially with the coach.**

**VIII. MISCELLANEOUS:** The remaining odds and ends.

**A. Uniform Inspections:** Uniform inspections are held before performances/events. All members must pass inspection to perform. Any member failing inspection will receive a strike and may not perform. The inspection is administered by captain(s) and involves uniform condition, shoe condition, hair/make-up, prop or equipment, jewelry, gum, etc.

**B. Strike-Checks:** Routine check-offs are conducted by the coach. If a member does not perform up to a specified set of standards (knowledge, presentation, poise, position, behavior, attendance, etc.), **that member will receive a strike and can be pulled from performance at the coach’s discretion.**

**C. Not performing:** Any member NOT performing **due to injury or due to disciplinary action** is **REQUIRED** to be on time at the performance, dressed in team sweats or another designated outfit. Also, any member not performing may be asked to assist the coach with props, music, video, etc.

**D. Level of Appropriateness:** ALL performances are school related events; therefore, all music and choreography must be school appropriate. Profane or suggestive lyrics as well as tasteless or suggestive choreography will NOT be tolerated. **The coach MUST approve of MUSIC before choreography begins and approve of CHOREOGRAPHY before teaching begins.** Good rule of thumb: if it feels like something will not be approved, it probably won’t be.

**E. CHOREOGRAPHY:** The captain(s) and coach usually generate choreography. But, input from other members is welcome; such input needs to be given outside of practice or when solicited.

**F. Competition Solos/Ensembles:** All members are **strongly encouraged** to participate in one solo and/or ensemble during the competition season; the team will pay for a portion of one dance per participating member depending on cost.

**G. SPRING SHOW:** During preparations for the annual spring show, all members are asked to help with choreography and costuming. Failure to adhere to deadlines will result in a strike.

**H. Injury:** It is important to stay healthy. If a member has any previous injuries, please inform the coach before try-outs or the season heightens. Also, if at any time during the season a member is injured, **INFORM THE COACH IMMEDIATELY**. If an injury occurs, the coach will decide the best course of action. Good rule of thumb: if experiencing pain, **STOP!**

**I. Out of town competitions and team trips:** Members will receive as much notice as possible if such a trip were to occur. Based on Blue Valley and KSHSAA guidelines, the team is somewhat limited in the extent to which it may travel. Competitions of this nature occur in the spring semester; other team trips occur at various times of the year, but do not take place annual. **Travel and lodging costs are covered by each individual member and team fundraising.**

**J. Lettering:** In order to receive a varsity letter for dance team, a member must:

1. Participate in 90% of all performances, events, functions, etc.
2. Participate in 90% of fundraising and community service efforts.

**K. Parental and family support is needed and always welcome.** During the year, families may be asked to host a team dinner and parents may be asked to help with event logistics. Family support keeps the program going just as much as the team does. Parents are asked to remember the following: When members are “on dance team time,” please respect the rules of the program and the coach. Offer and express your support prior to and after dance team events. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please contact the coach.

### **Head Coach Contact Information**

Mrs. Claire M. Reagan

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