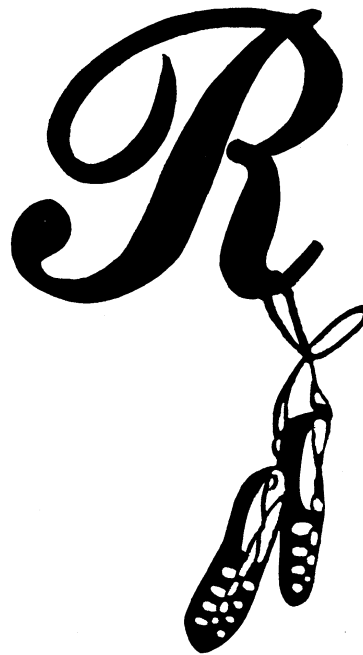


**The Regent  
Academy of Irish  
Dance  
Parents' Association**



**Parent Handbook**

**2010 - 2011**

**[www.regentacademy.ca](http://www.regentacademy.ca)**



# The Regent Academy of Irish Dance Parents' Association Handbook 2010 - 2011

## Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Mandate</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Regent Academy School Overview</b> .....	<b>2</b>
3.1	<i>Owner and Instructor</i> .....	2
3.2	<i>Student</i> .....	2
3.3	<i>Competition</i> .....	2
<b>4</b>	<b>Registration and Fees</b> .....	<b>2</b>
4.1	<i>Registration</i> .....	2
4.2	<i>Fees</i> .....	3
<b>5</b>	<b>Class Organization</b> .....	<b>4</b>
5.1	<i>Classroom Etiquette</i> .....	4
5.2	<i>Instructors</i> .....	4
5.3	<i>Class Location</i> .....	4
5.4	<i>Class Schedule</i> .....	5
5.5	<i>Feis Monday</i> .....	5
<b>6</b>	<b>Class Attire and Conduct</b> .....	<b>6</b>
6.1	<i>Class Uniform</i> .....	6
6.2	<i>School Regulations</i> .....	7
6.3	<i>School Communication</i> .....	7
<b>7</b>	<b>Practice</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Workshops</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Semi Private Lessons</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>The Regent Academy of Irish Dance Parents' Association (RAIDPA)</b> .9	
10.1	<i>RAIDPA Registration</i> .....	9
10.2	<i>Communication</i> .....	9
10.3	<i>RAIDPA Fees</i> .....	10
10.4	<i>Volunteers</i> .....	10
10.5	<i>Volunteer Point System</i> .....	11
10.5.1	<i>Minimum Points Earned each Year</i> .....	11
10.6	<i>Earning Points</i> .....	11
10.7	<i>Show and Performance Participation</i> .....	12
10.8	<i>Other point earning opportunities</i> .....	12
10.9	<i>Point Record</i> .....	12
<b>11</b>	<b>Feis Competition</b> .....	<b>13</b>
11.1	<i>Class Feis</i> .....	13
11.2	<i>Feiseanna</i> .....	13
11.2.1	<i>Feis Syllabus</i> .....	14
11.2.2	<i>Dance Competition Levels</i> .....	14

11.2.3	Advancing to the next competition Level .....	15
11.2.4	Feis Competitive Age .....	16
11.2.5	Feis Competition .....	16
11.2.6	Local Feiseanna .....	18
11.2.7	Oireachtas .....	18
11.2.8	Other Feiseanna.....	18
11.3	<i>Local Feis Registration</i> .....	19
11.3.1	Feis Fee Payment .....	19
11.4	<i>Signing up for a Feis</i> .....	20
11.4.1	Return of Feis Record .....	20
11.5	<i>What happens at a Feis?</i> .....	21
11.5.1	Participating at a Feis .....	22
11.5.2	Feis Etiquette .....	24
<b>12</b>	<b>Competition Dress .....</b>	<b>25</b>
12.1	<i>Typical Competition – What do I wear?</i> .....	25
12.2	<i>Class Dress</i> .....	26
12.3	<i>Rental Dresses</i> .....	26
12.4	<i>Figure Competition</i> .....	26
12.5	<i>Solo Dress</i> .....	26
12.5.1	Used Dress Suggestions .....	27
12.5.2	New Dress Suggestions .....	27
12.5.3	Other Items Required .....	27
<b>13</b>	<b>Dance Shows and Performances.....</b>	<b>28</b>
13.1	<i>Irish Culture</i> .....	28
13.2	<i>Shows and Performances</i> .....	29
13.3	<i>Notice of Shows</i> .....	29
13.4	<i>Show Dress and Attire</i> .....	30
13.5	<i>The Show itself</i> .....	30
<b>14</b>	<b>The Gala Performance .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>Bursaries.....</b>	<b>31</b>
15.1	<i>Bursary Application – World Competition</i> .....	31
15.2	<i>Bursary Application – National Competition</i> .....	32
15.3	<i>Qualification for Support</i> .....	32
15.4	<i>Bursary Amounts</i> .....	32

## 1 Mandate

The Mandate of the Regent Academy of Irish Dance Parents' Association is:

**First**, to promote and demonstrate Irish Culture through Irish Dance shows and performances in and around Calgary.

**Second**, to provide financial assistance to the Academy's dancers for travel to various Feiseanna including the North American Championships and World Championships of Irish Dance.

**Third**, to promote fellowship and camaraderie among member dancers and parents.

The Regent Academy of Irish Dance Parents' Association (RAIDPA) is an Incorporated Not for Profit Society formed to promote and support the dancers of the Regent Academy of Irish Dance.

RAIDPA has the right to transact business, form committees and enact motions according to its mandate, as stated in this Parent Handbook, the Society's bylaws and the laws of an Incorporated Society in the Province of Alberta.

## 2 Introduction

Irish dancing is a vibrant means by which young people can learn about Irish history and culture.

There is a dual benefit; first to the dancers themselves and second to the thousands of people that the Regent Academy entertains each year. The ultimate goal is to provide every student with the opportunity to learn, dance, compete and perform.

There are numerous other ways that Irish dance benefits young people. The discipline of the dance art itself develops skill, discipline, poise and confidence. Dancers learn the demands of solo dancing and the teamwork needed for Figure (group) dancing. Flexibility, coordination, aerobic conditioning, pride and a sense of accomplishment are among the many benefits to students of Irish dancing.

### **3 Regent Academy School Overview**

#### **3.1 Owner and Instructor**

The Regent Academy of Irish Dance (the Academy/the School) has been operating in Calgary since 1972 and received formal accreditation in 1980 from the Irish Dancing Commission in Dublin, Ireland.

Owner and Head Instructor, Mrs. Claire Regent, TCRG, began dancing at age six in Ireland. Following her competitive career, Mrs. Regent danced professionally in Ireland, Europe and the United States with the Lily Comerford Irish Dance troupe.

#### **3.2 Student**

Students attend class twice each week to learn the steps of Irish Dance. Twice each year an intensive workshop is held for additional student teaching.

#### **3.3 Competition**

As members of a competitive school, all Regent Academy dancers are encouraged to participate in Feiseanna (Irish Dance competitions) in their age category and level of proficiency in Irish Dance. Regent dancers regularly attend Feiseanna in Calgary, Edmonton and other parts of Western Canada and may qualify annually to compete at both the North American and World Irish Dance Championships.

Dance competition levels range from Beginner to Open (6 competitive levels) and include age ranges from 5 to adult.

### **4 Registration and Fees**

#### **4.1 Registration**

A registration package will be handed out to students at the end of May each year. All students are expected to register for the subsequent dance year by June 15<sup>th</sup> of the current dance year. The registration package will include:

- Covering letter from Mrs. Regent,
- Student Registration form (to be signed by student and parent)
- Parents' Association Registration form (to be signed by parent)
- Waiver form and Acknowledgement of Risk (to be signed by parent)
- School Regulations, Student Obligations and Expectations

- Volunteer points Form

All 3 signed forms and payment must be returned to Mrs. Regent to complete a student registration for the upcoming dance year. Registrations shall preferably be returned at class. They also may be mailed to:

The Regent Academy of Irish Dance  
24 Maple Court Crescent SE  
Calgary, Alberta T2J 1V7

Attn: Mrs. Claire Regent

Phone (403) 271 – 1684

Any registration forms received via mail without tuition fee payment are considered incomplete.

The school requires 30 days written notice in the event of a student's transfer or resignation. Refunds will be calculated pro-rata upon receipt of notice. Partial months are non-refundable.

Please note that the Regent Academy does not accept transfers from other Irish Dance schools within the Calgary area.

Mrs. Regent has the final approval for acceptance of all students.

## **4.2 Fees**

Mrs. Regent sets Academy tuition fee schedules annually. Payment options are outlined on the registration forms. Registration forms are also available on the Regent Website.

All cheques for Academy fees are to be made payable to "Mrs. Claire Regent". Any registration forms handed in without payment will be considered incomplete and the dancer may be subject to removal from class if alternate arrangements have not been made with Mrs. Regent.

Mrs. Regent reserves the right to accept or reject any dancer's application.

NSF cheques are subject to a penalty. If two (2) NSF cheques are received within one school year, all fees to the Academy and RAIDPA will become due and payable immediately via cash or certified cheque only. Non-compliance will be considered as a dancer's resignation from the Academy.

## 5 Class Organization

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. Parents are required to call or e-mail Mrs. Regent to inform her of their child's absence from class.

There are two teaching level classes, a Beginner/Intermediate class and a Championship class. Students are assigned to class based on their dance skill and proficiency level

Mrs. Regent determines class and student assignments at the beginning of the dance year. Her decision is based on dance level and maturity and is reviewed annually. Changes of class assignment will not normally occur during the dance year.

Mrs. Regent decides curriculum and instruction for all classes to An Coimisiun rules. Mrs. Regent, her Assistant(s) and Intern Instructors provide class instruction under her supervision.

### 5.1 Classroom Etiquette

Please note that:

- Dancers are NOT permitted in the studio until the previous class has been dismissed.
- Dancers and instructors only will be allowed in the studio (viewing days for parents will be set from time to time during the year).

### 5.2 Instructors

Mrs. Claire Regent is the head teacher at the Regent Academy. From time to time, she may bring in additional teachers, during a Workshop, for example.

**Intern Instructors** are Regent dancers competing at the Preliminary or Open Championship level. They assist at various classes under the direction of Mrs. Regent.

**Assistant Instructors** are Regent dancers competing at the Open Championship level who have previously served as Intern Instructors for a minimum of three (3) years. They must be working toward their formal TCRG teaching accreditation. They assist at various classes under the direction of Mrs. Regent.

### 5.3 Class Location

Classes are held at the North Glenmore Park Community Association Building,  
2231 Longridge Drive SW in Calgary.

## 5.4 Class Schedule

The class schedule for the 2010 - 2011 Dance year is as follows:

Beginner (Class 1)	Monday 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM Thursday 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM
Intermediate (Class 2A)	Tuesday 6:00 PM to 7:25 PM Thursday 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM
Intermediate (Class 2B)	Tuesday 6:00 PM to 7:25 PM Thursday 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM
Championship class (Class 3)	Tuesday 5:00 PM to 6:30 PM Thursday 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM
Figures Class (All students)	Thursday 6:30 PM to 7:30 PM
Adult Class	Wednesday 7:00 PM to 8:00 PM

Figures class is for all students from all sections. Figures class is an overlapping class for all levels of dancer.

Classes run from Labour Day through to the end of June. Classes are concurrent with the City of Calgary Public Board of Education Academic school year, including Christmas break. Classes are held during Easter break, regardless of school schedule.

Statutory holidays are observed if they fall on a class instruction night.

The following Statutory holidays are observed and classes are cancelled for the day.

Thanksgiving Monday (October)  
Alberta Family Day (February)  
Victoria Day (May)

## 5.5 Feis Monday

Mondays immediately following local Calgary Feiseanna are called “Feis Mondays” and classes are cancelled for that day. All students are invited to the Tuesday class of that week. This class is usually spent on Gala and Show practice.

Feis Mondays are defined on the following days:

<b>Feis</b>	<b>Feis Schedule</b>	<b>Feis or holiday Monday</b>
Irwin Feis	Thanksgiving Weekend	Thanksgiving Monday, class cancelled
Blakey Feis	January	Feis Monday, class cancelled. All dancers invited to Tuesday class.
Edmonton Feis	February	Alberta Family Day, class cancelled
Possak Feis	March	Feis Monday, class cancelled. All dancers invited to Tuesday class.
Brady Ard Na Greine Feis	June	Feis Monday, class cancelled. All dancers invited to Tuesday class.

## **6 Class Attire and Conduct**

### **6.1 Class Uniform**

The Regent Academy of Irish Dance (the School) has an established class uniform. The uniform is available from the Parents' Association who maintain an inventory of uniforms. Look on the Regent website, <http://www.regentacademy.ca/contact.htm> for uniform coordinator contact information. Any of the Executive can assist to contact the Uniform coordinator.

Dancers are expected to wear their class uniform at all times during dance class. Warm-up pants and hoodies may only be worn during warm-ups and stretching. Students who have difficulty wearing their shoes due to injury should consult with the class instructor.

The following items of clothing constitute the Regent Academy class uniform:

- Black Regent shorts or black skort,
- Black or White Regent T-shirt or white and black cap-sleeved T-shirt,
- Solid white, calf-length socks,
- Irish dance shoes, (soft and hard)
- Hair elastic for long hair.

## 6.2 School Regulations

Please note the following School regulations:

1. Dancers are to remain in the studio unless excused by the instructor,
2. Only shoes, dance bags and water bottles may be brought into the studio (no food or outerwear).
3. Outerwear and other items not needed in class shall be hung on the coat rack outside the studio (for security reasons, do not leave valuables unattended).
4. Respectful behaviour toward the instructors and fellow dancers is to be demonstrated at all times,

Any dancer who violates the above class regulations will be subject to disciplinary measures. On the first offence, the dancer will be removed from class activity. On the second, a letter will be sent home. On the third, the dancer will be suspended from class activity for two (2) weeks.

## 6.3 School Communication

Please note that all communication regarding dance school activities, reminders etc. is by email. Please ensure that you supply a current and valid email address on your registration form to receive communication from the Regent Academy of Irish Dance (School).

If your email address changes, please advise the RAIDPA secretary so that the email address book can be updated.

## 7 Practice

Irish Dance is disciplined learning and requires consistent practice and effort to become proficient. Like any activity, hard work is required to achieve success.

Personal progress and Feis performance are directly affected by practice time, attitude and effort in class and at home. Dancers competing at (or aspiring to) National and International (World's) levels require a rigorous commitment to practice.

Competing dancers are expected to commit to the following practice schedule.

<b>Dancer Level</b>	<b>Daily Practice</b>	<b>Weekly Practice</b>
Beginner / Advanced Beginner	30 minutes	4 hours
Novice	45 minutes	5 hours

Prizewinner	60 minutes	6 hours
Preliminary/Open Championship	2 hours	10+ hours

## **8 Workshops**

Workshops are open to RAIDPA member dancers only and are an integral part of the dance year. There are two workshops throughout the year, one in August (5-day workshop) and one in January (3-day workshop).

Guest instructors and Mrs. Regent teach the workshops.

Dancers registering for a workshop are required to pay and share the cost of the workshop. RAIDPA contributes to and subsidizes the cost of each workshop, reducing the cost to students.

To preserve continuity for all, part time attendance or partial payment is not permitted.

Most importantly, dancers who wish to advance at competitions are strongly encouraged to attend these workshops as new steps are learned. The most up to date steps are necessary if a dancer wishes to do well at regular competitions.

Due to issues of timing and proper execution, dancers are not to learn steps from other students except under the supervision of the instructor.

Normal class etiquette must be followed. The respect of other students, instructors and guest instructors is mandatory. Talking or distracting behaviour will not be tolerated and any dancer behaving in a disruptive manner will be removed from the session. All students attend the workshop to learn, not be distracted by others.

Dancers are to wear their class uniforms for the Workshop. See section "Class Attire and Conduct".

## **9 Semi Private Lessons**

Semi private lessons are available to students whom Mrs. Regent believes are demonstrating commitment, dedication and enthusiasm for Irish Dance. Studio rental and Instructor fees are the responsibility of the student/parent. Please contact Mrs. Regent directly for more information.

Additional lessons may be held for students prior to the Oireachtas, World or National competition. Cost of studio rental and Mrs. Regent's instructor fee is the responsibility of students attending these classes.

## **10 The Regent Academy of Irish Dance Parents' Association (RAIDPA)**

The Regent Academy of Irish Dance Parents' Association (RAIDPA) supports all member dancers. All students and parents are encouraged to join and become active in the Parents' Association.

RAIDPA is separate from, however, works closely with Mrs. Regent and the Regent Academy to support the mandate.

RAIDPA membership benefits include:

- Participation in dance workshops
- Submission of Group Feis Registration
- Rental and access to Class dresses (if required),
- Bursary support for attendance at World and National competitions
- Participation in dance shows throughout the year,
- Participation in other RAIDPA supported and sponsored activities.

Please visit the Regent Academy website for current RAIDPA activities, schedule and further information.

[www.regentacademy.ca](http://www.regentacademy.ca)

### **10.1 RAIDPA Registration**

RAIDPA Registration forms are handed out as part of the Student registration package near the end of May each year. Registration forms are also available on the Regent website. Membership in RAIDPA is encouraged although it is not mandatory for parents. If you choose not to join RAIDPA, please write, "not joining" across the RAIDPA registration forms and hand them in with other registration forms.

Parents and/or dancers joining RAIDPA are requested to submit Registration forms and payment concurrently with Regent Academy (School) registration forms.

All RAIDPA members, parents and dancers are expected to contribute to the various volunteer activities of the Parents' Association.

### **10.2 Communication**

All communication from the Parents' Association regarding

- Meetings,
- Shows
- Notices
- Etc.

Is by email. Please ensure that you supply a current and valid email address on the registration form to receive communication from the Parents' Association.

If your email address changes, please advise the RAIDPA secretary so that the email address book can be updated.

### **10.3 RAIDPA Fees**

The Executive Committee sets RAIDPA fees on an annual basis. RAIDPA fees are payable prior to the beginning of dance classes for the current year (July 1 of each dance year).

Parents having more than one dancer are charged 100% of RAIDPA fees for the first dancer and 50% of the fees for subsequent siblings.

### **10.4 Volunteers**

All RAIDPA members are required and expected to assist in a volunteer capacity at some time throughout the dance year. There are many opportunities available to serve on committees and contribute assistance. Volunteer opportunities will be presented on a regular basis at RAIDPA meetings. You may contact any executive committee member to volunteer for any position.

Current Executive and active committees within RAIDPA are:

1. RAIDPA Executive (5 positions)
2. Show Coordinator (Executive position)
3. Class Feis Coordinator and assistants
4. Dress Coordinator
5. Feis Registrar and Feis Entries
6. Gala Coordinator
7. New Parent Liaison
8. Uniform Coordinator
9. Used Shoe Coordinator
10. Volunteer Coordinator
11. Website Coordinator

Numerous other jobs and tasks are available as helpers, assistants and "general gophers".

## **10.5 Volunteer Point System**

The Regent Academy is a small group and all RAIDPA members are expected to help with the many activities in some capacity. A point system is in place to ensure equal participation and sharing of workload by all members of RAIDPA. Participating in the various activities and sharing the workload supports the mandate of the Regent Academy of Irish Dance Parents' Association. Various activities earn points for participation by parents or dancers.

To ensure equal participation by each RAIDPA member, each dance family must earn a minimum number of points annually. The point count begins at 0 on July 1 of each dance year.

Point count is assessed for each dance family. If there is more than one dance member in a family, all family dancers contribute to earning points. Expected point count is the points required for the most senior dancer.

### **10.5.1 Minimum Points Earned each Year**

A dancer's dance category level is recorded on the dancer's Registration, as of July 1 each year. Category level is determined using the An Coimisiun Le Rinci Gaelacha criteria for trophy dance competition. For example, if the majority of dances are at the Novice level, the dancer is placed in the Novice category.

If the dancer moves up in level throughout the year, the level within RAIDPA and the point requirement will not change until the following dance year.

The following minimum point levels are established for each dance level.

New Dancer (First year Dancer)	25 points
Beginner/Advanced Beginner	50 points
Novice/Prizewinner	75 points
Preliminary/Open	100 points

## **10.6 Earning Points**

There are many opportunities to earn points throughout the year. Participating in shows, assisting with various events, serving on or chairing a committee or the executive, etc will earn points.

Parents may earn points by assisting at various activities and attending RAIDPA meetings. The following is a list of activities and points earned. This list may be revised from time to time.

Attendance at a regular RAIDPA meeting	5 points
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Attendance at a RAIDPA Executive meeting	5 points
Dancer performing in a show	5 points
Dancer performing at the Gala	5 points
Member/volunteer on a committee for the year	25 points
Serving as a Committee coordinator for the year	50 points
Serving on the Regent Executive for a one year term	75 points

### **10.7 Show and Performance Participation**

Dancers may earn points by participating in dance shows and the annual Gala Performance. All dancers, regardless of experience are given the opportunity to appear in the annual Gala.

Dance shows have minimum experience and dance routines required. These requirements are described in Section 13.2, "Shows and Performances".

Show dancers are expected to participate in a minimum of 10 shows (50 points) each year. This may sound like a lot, however, Regent Dancers performed at over 40 shows last year. There are many opportunities to perform at shows.

Since shows are the prime method of earning revenue for payment of Feis fees for all dancers, any dancer competing in a Feis, World's or Nationals, is expected to make a concerted effort towards show participation.

### **10.8 Other point earning opportunities**

Other suggested parent volunteer activities include:

- Bingo worker for North Glenmore Park Community Association,
- Assisting at the Class Feis,
- Assisting at the Gala,
- Organizing class pictures etc.

Other activities may earn points. Points will be assigned on a per activity basis. Point count for a particular activity will be assigned by the Volunteer coordinator and Executive.

A form is available on the Regent website that may be filled out and printed summarizing points earned. It provides space for description of volunteer activity and hours worked. The form must be submitted by email to the Volunteer Coordinator within 30 days of the activity.

### **10.9 Point Record**

The Volunteer Coordinator will maintain the record of each parent's current point count and total points expected for the year. Parents and dancers are expected

to maintain copies of their Volunteer point submission to verify any disputes with volunteer point count at the end of the dance year.

## **11 Feis Competition**

Feis is a Gaelic word meaning “gathering”. It is pronounced “Fesh”.

A Feis is a competition among students from other schools. A Feis is usually hosted by a particular school.

Any student may enter any Feis. All that is required is the dance teacher's approval. Part of the Feis entry process is to specify a dancer's age and competitive level. The dancer will compete at the specified age and dance level at that Feis.

The Regent Parent's Association registers students (provided they signed up for the Feis) for local Feiseanna. How to enter local Feiseanna and other Feiseanna is described in this section.

### **11.1 Class Feis**

The Regent Academy hosts a “Class Feis”, usually in December or January. It is not an official Feis. All dancers, regardless of level or participation at competitive Feiseanna, are encouraged to attend and compete at the Class Feis. It is a “practice run” and gives all dancers the opportunity to participate in a Feis.

For beginners, it gives practice time for Feis competition. For more senior dancers, it is more competition time in front of an Adjudicator. The Adjudicator at the Class Feis provides comments and suggestions to all dancers for improvement, experience and learning.

For parents, it gives the experience of a Feis in a more relaxed atmosphere. Parents have the opportunity to ask questions about the Feis and how they work.

Full dance costume is expected at the Class Feis. This includes:

- Poodle socks,
- Shoes (hard and soft),
- Jumper, Class dress or solo dress,
- Wig, curled hair or a bun

### **11.2 Feiseanna**

The Regent Academy is a competitive school. All dancers registered with the Regent Academy are expected and encouraged to participate in local and regional Feiseanna throughout the year to enhance skills, promote fellowship and build personal confidence. Advancement to the more challenging levels requires participation at many competitions.

Mrs. Regent will determine when a student is ready to participate in his or her first Feis. Most new dancers will be technically ready for competition towards the end of their first year or early during their second year of dance. A dancer's confidence and desire will be taken into consideration.

Once a dancer is actively competing, there are a minimum number of competitions that a dancer is expected to attend each year. This number varies based on competitive level.

Beginners and Advanced Beginners	minimum 2 competitions annually
Novice and Prizewinner	minimum 3 competitions annually
Preliminary and Open	minimum 4 competitions annually

As representatives of the Regent Academy, dancers are expected to be respectful toward fellow dancers, adjudicators, parents, volunteers and other dance teachers when attending Feiseanna. Any student behaving in a disrespectful manner will be suspended from the next competition.

### **11.2.1 Feis Syllabus**

Each Feis publishes a Feis Syllabus that outlines the rules for that Feis. The Syllabus is generally based on the North American Feis Commission Syllabus, available on the North American website, [www.northamericanfeiscommission.org](http://www.northamericanfeiscommission.org)

The Syllabus explains the rules for a specific Feis for each of the competition levels. It also describes the requirements for advancing into the next dance category.

### **11.2.2 Dance Competition Levels**

There are 6 dance category levels in Western Canada.

1. Beginner
2. Advanced Beginner
3. Novice
4. Prizewinner
5. Preliminary Championship
6. Open Championship

Dancers progress through the category levels in each dance. It is not uncommon to compete in different dances in 2 or even 3 dance levels. E.g., Hornpipe in Novice while Reel in Advanced Beginner.

Confirm by reading each Feis syllabus when a dancers moves up in competitive level. For example, if there are 10 competitors in a competition, the top 3 medal winners (first, second and third place) will advance to the next higher competition level.

### **11.2.3 Advancing to the next competition Level**

This is a general description. The rules for advancing to the next level are described in each Feis Syllabus for each Feis.

#### **11.2.3.1 Beginner through Prizewinner**

Beginner through Prizewinner dancers compete for medals and placement within their own age category and competitive dance level.

If there are 6 or more dancers in a competition, the first place winner advances up to the next competitive level.

If there are 10 or more competitors, first, second and third place dancers advance to the next competitive level.

If there are more than 20 competitors, the first through fourth place dancers will advance to the next competitive level.

#### **11.2.3.2 Trophy Dances**

There may be several Trophy Dances at a competition. They will probably include at least Treble Jig and Treble Reel. Some Feiseanna include a Slip Jig and/or Reel special competition.

Treble Reel, Slip Jig and Reel Special are for fun. Dancers are competing for a trophy only.

Treble Jig is the important competition. Advancing from Prizewinner to Preliminary Championship requires the dancer to win (first place) two Treble Jig Trophy competitions at 2 different Feiseanna.

This is a significant challenge and any dancer accomplishing this should be very proud of what they have accomplished.

### **11.2.3.3 Preliminary and Open Championship**

Preliminary and Open Championship dancers compete for an overall combined Championship trophy within each of the competitive levels. Their dancing will include a hard shoe dance, a soft shoe dance and possibly a set dance.

Judges award an overall score to each dancer for each of the 3 dances to determine the Championship winner. Each championship dance is judged by 3 Adjudicators. Their scores are combined to determine the dancer's score.

Winning 2 trophies at the Preliminary level advances a dancer to the Open level of competition. Again, a dancer should be very proud of their accomplishment. It takes a great deal of work to achieve Open Championship level in Irish Dance.

### **11.2.4 Feis Competitive Age**

Age level is determined by the age of the dancer on January 1 of each year. Ages are defined as "under 10" (U-10) or "under 7" (U-7).

Age competitions may be combined, depending on the number of competitors registered for a specific dance at a Feis. For example, U-13 and U-14 are often combined into a single U-14 competition.

### **11.2.5 Feis Competition**

There are 2 types of dancing at a Feis.

**Figure dancing** is a group of 2, 3, 4, 6 or 8 dancers who compete as a group. Each figure group is judged by an Adjudicator.

**Solo dancing** Dancers compete individually in front of an Adjudicator. Note that 2 or 3 dancers may dance on stage at the same time; however, they are solo dancing and are judged individually.

At a Feis, all competitors compete within their own dance level and age category.

There are also 2 distinct competition levels at any Feis, Beginner through Prizewinner and Preliminary/Open Championship levels.

### **11.2.5.1 Beginner through Prizewinner Dancers**

Dance competitions at these levels are:

- Reel (soft shoe)
- Light Jig (soft shoe)
- Single Jig (soft shoe)
- Slip Jig (soft shoe)
  
- Treble Jig (hard shoe)
- Hornpipe (hard shoe)
- Traditional Set, also known as St. Patrick's Day (hard shoe)
- Treble Reel Trophy (hard shoe)
- Trophy Dance – Treble Jig (hard shoe)
- Slip Jig Special (soft shoe)

Trophy dances are held for Beginner/Advanced Beginner and Novice/Prizewinner. Winning 2 trophy dances at 2 competitions advance a dancer to the next dance level. The standard Trophy competition is a Treble Jig. A dancer will move from Beginner/Advanced Beginner to Novice/Prizewinner to Preliminary Championship level by winning first place in 2 trophy competitions.

### **11.2.5.2 Preliminary/Open Championship Dancers**

Preliminary and Open Championship level dancers may dance solo dances and always dance Championship dances at a competition. Championship dances include a soft shoe, a hard shoe and may include a set dance.

Winning 2 Championships advance a dancer from Preliminary to Open Championship level.

Solo dances are defined in each Feis syllabus and may be Option "A", Option "B" or Option "C". These options change every Feis and are described in the Syllabus. Solo Dances include:

- Reel
- Slip Jig
- Treble Jig
- Hornpipe
- Non Traditional Set Dance

The specific hard and soft shoe dances depend on the dancer's year of birth.

Dancers in Preliminary or Open Championship level who are in the U8 or U9 age categories dance the Traditional Set Dance “St. Patrick’s Day”.

Some Feiseanna do not use Solo dances and instead award placements in each of the Championship dances.

### **11.2.6 Local Feiseanna**

The 6 local area Feiseanna are:

Irwin Feis	Thanksgiving weekend in October (Calgary)
Blakey Feis	Third weekend of January (Calgary)
Edmonton ISS Feis	February Family Day weekend (Edmonton)
Possak Feis	Beginning of March (Calgary)
Mattierin Feis	End of April (Sherwood Park)
Ard Na Greine Feis	First weekend of June (Calgary)

### **11.2.7 Oireachtas**

Once each year, an Oireachtas is held. The Oireachtas is where dancers may qualify to compete at Nationals (North America) or Worlds (World competition for Irish Dance).

North America is split into 7 separate competition regions. Calgary is in the Western Canadian Region.

Dancers competing at the Oireachtas must be at Preliminary or Open Level.

The Oireachtas is normally held the first week of November somewhere in Western Canada. For the past several years, the Oireachtas has rotated between Kelowna, Vancouver and Edmonton.

### **11.2.8 Other Feiseanna**

There are many other Feiseanna. A list of current Western Canadian Feis competition locations and dates is available on the Regent Website. See [www.regentacademy.ca/feisinfo.htm](http://www.regentacademy.ca/feisinfo.htm)

If you are traveling to another part of North America, other Feiseanna occur almost every weekend of the year. A link to the North American Feis Commission website, listing all North American competitions, dates and locations is provided on the Regent website under Feis Info.

[www.regentacademy.ca/feisinfo.htm](http://www.regentacademy.ca/feisinfo.htm)

Feiseanna in other parts of North America sometimes use different age categories, different competitions and may have different methods of operation than those held locally.

If you would like to compete at another Feis, contact the Feis Registrar directly to ensure registration and payment is submitted in a timely manner. Registration and payment are typically required 3 to 4 weeks in advance of the Feis. The Registrar will advise when Feis fee payment is required.

### **11.3 Local Feis Registration**

Entry at a Feis requires payment of Feis fees for each competitor. Each competitive Figure dance, solo, trophy and championship dance require payment of Feis fees for each dancer. Feis fees are described in each Feis Syllabus, essentially the "Rules of Engagement" for any Feis.

Fees may be \$5 for each solo dance and \$10 for each trophy dance.

Preliminary and Open Championship dancers pay \$15 or more for each of their competitions.

Feis fees for local Feiseanna are paid in advance, on behalf of each dancer by the Regent Parents' Association.

Feis registration is submitted as a group for Regent Dancers by the Feis Registrar. The group registration is submitted approximately 4 weeks before a Feis.

Depending on funds available, Feis registration fees may be subsidized by the Parents' Association to reduce the cost to Parents and dancers.

#### **11.3.1 Feis Fee Payment**

When a dancer signs up for a Feis, they will receive a Feis Record sheet. The balance of Feis fees owing to the Parents' Association is printed on this sheet. Feis fees are due the week following a Feis.

Non-payment of Feis fees means that you will not be registered for the next Feis, regardless of signing up on the Feis sheet. Until the balance due is cleared, Feis entry will not be submitted as part of group registration.

Please note that if you sign up for a Feis, fees are payable whether or not you actually attend. Feis registration is usually completed 3 to 4 weeks prior to the

actual Feis date. When the Feis registration date is passed, no further changes to registration are permitted.

## **11.4 Signing up for a Feis**

If you are a new dancer, Mrs. Regent will advise you when you are ready to enter your first Feis.

Approximately 6 weeks before a Feis, sign up sheets for local Feiseanna are posted on the bulletin board at North Glenmore Park Community (bulletin board outside studio door) prior to the registration deadline for each Feis. Registration deadline is typically 4 weeks before a Feis.

Feis registration steps include:

1. Sign up for the Feis on the class bulletin board, being sure to include the dancer's birth date and any dances that are new since the last Feis (this refers to dances that the dancer has never competed in, not new steps). If a dancer is entering in Treble Jig Trophy, Treble Reel Trophy or Slip Jig Trophy competitions, indicate this on the Feis signup sheet.
2. Approximately 1 week before the Feis, each dancer will be given a draft Feis entry sheet by the Feis registrar. Review the Feis entry form. Any errors or omissions in dancer level or age category should be noted on the form and returned to the Feis registrar. Ensure that the dancer is registered in the correct level of competition and age group.
3. Review the final Feis entry form when returned to the dancer prior to the Feis.
4. Attend the Feis and record competition details (for each competition) for your dancer on the Feis entry form. Competition detail includes:
  - the actual number of dance competitors in each competition
  - your dancer's placement in that competition.
5. Competition results are usually posted in a "results room" or on a large wall somewhere at the Feis.

### **11.4.1 Return of Feis Record**

6. After completing the Feis, the Feis entry form must be completed, including dancer placement and competitor count for each competition dance. The Feis record must be returned to the Feis registrar at the next class.

7. Pay the Feis fees due to the Parents' Association printed on the Feis record. Fees are due the week following a Feis.

It is recommended that the dancer keep either a photocopy of the completed Feis form or a register/notebook with the dancer's results at each Feis. This is helpful in the case of any discrepancy between the Feis registrar's records and the dancer's records.

It is the responsibility of the dancer and/or their parents to maintain a record of Feis results and competitive progress of the dancer.

Note that many Feiseanna sell a summary results page. Often, these results pages have judge's comments. They are often well worth money spent for feedback information received.

### **11.5 What happens at a Feis?**

Feiseanna appear to be very confusing the first time. These notes are meant to explain and reduce some of the confusion.

Feiseanna are usually a 3-day event (in Western Canada). Competitions may be assigned on either day. The following are rough guidelines from current Feis experience.

Usually, Day 1, Friday evening, is for Figure and Adult competitions. At local Calgary Feiseanna, students may participate in Figure competitions.

Dance competitions and stage assignments are described in the Feis Program. There is usually an approximate schedule showing times and stage assignments for each competition.

Due to the unknown number of dancers in each competition, a specific schedule cannot be defined.

Feiseanna have a defined start time. Competitions usually begin at 8:00 AM (Saturday – Day 2) and 8:00 AM or 8:30 AM (Sunday – Day 3). There will be a break for lunch sometime around noon. Competitions occur sequentially until completed. There are no assigned times for any specific competition, other than the first competition of each day.

Beginner dancers usually start first, early in the morning, (identified in the Feis Program). As the day progresses, older dancers compete. Beginner dancers are usually complete before lunch. They may have to return early on the second day for trophy competitions. This is identified in the Feis program and does vary from Feis to Feis.

Older and more senior dancers usually compete later in the day. Preliminary and Open Championship dancers may compete on Day 3 (Sunday) of competition.

Some Feiseanna have reversed competition order. They may have Preliminary and Open Championship competitions on Day 2 (Saturday) and Beginner through Prizewinner competitions on Day 3 (Sunday). Check the Syllabus and Feis program. Sometimes a stage schedule is published on a Feis website a week or so before the Feis.

**What about lunch?** There are practically always concession booths at a Feis. Due to the unknown timing of the Feis, it is not recommended to leave the Feis for lunch. Sometimes the lunch “hour” is shortened in order to make up time lost earlier in the day.

Either bring a lunch or plan to use the concessions available for lunch.

### **11.5.1 Participating at a Feis**

1. If you are a beginner, arrive at the Feis 1 hour before it begins. This gives time to get your dancer changed, pick a seat at the assigned stage area and pick up competitor numbers and a Feis program.
2. Feis rules state that a dancer must be at the competition 60 minutes prior to their scheduled dance time. This is hard to estimate during the middle of the day, however, “be there early” is the best advice.
3. Admission fees are usually charged, purchase admission for one day or 2 days, depending on what is required for your dancer. The program will tell you whether you are dancing on 1, 2 or 3 days. If you dance on 3 days (Figures), there may be a discount offered for purchasing a “3 day pass”. Dancers and siblings do not pay an admission fee.
4. Purchase a Feis Program. The Feis program has the schedule of age categories, dance levels and stage assignments for the various competitions. Note that Programs are often available the night before a Feis, if you have time to go to the Feis venue early to get the Feis Program.

Programs list important information.

- a. Your dancer's competitor number.
- b. The competition numbers your dancer has registered for.
- c. A list of competition numbers and stage assignment for each competition day.
- d. An approximate timetable.

5. Look up your dancer's competitor number. Each dancer is assigned a Competitor number so that adjudicators can identify individual dancers. This is the same number for all solo dance competitions at that Feis.
6. Pick up your Competitor number. There will be a table somewhere at the Feis with Competitor numbers. It is usually the same table where you purchased a Feis program. They may be sorted by dancer last name or by Dance School. The competitor number remains the same for the entire Feis (solo competition) and must be worn on the front of the dance dress so that Adjudicators can identify each dancer.

Note that Figures dances (group dances) have different competitor numbers than solo competitions. Only 1 member of the Figures group wears the competitor number.

Numbers can be pinned on; however, this is rather destructive to an expensive dance dress. Plastic number holders are available to hold a competitor's number. It is suggested that the front be cut out, or a non-glossy holder be used, as plastic often glares and makes reading the number difficult from a distance.

7. A specific dance, age category and dance level are combined and referred to as a "Competition Number". The competition number may be Competition 237, Advanced Beginner, U10, Light Jig, for example.
8. Competition numbers for which your dancer has registered are usually printed on the back of your dancer's Competitor number card. Competition numbers for each dancer are listed in the Feis Program, sequentially. Dancers in each competition are either sorted by surname or competitor number.
9. Determine what stage you perform on (stages are usually lettered "A" through "F" and beyond). Note that different dance category or age levels may be held on different stages.
10. At the back of each stage, hanging on the wall, are the competition numbers posted for that stage. They are posted in sequential order of competition. As competitions are completed, these numbers are removed from the wall. Current competition numbers displayed help determine the timing of when a specific competition will be held and when your dancer competes.
11. At each stage, listen for a dancer's competition number to be paged for backstage check in. When called, the dancer must go, alone, to the backstage area (usually beside the stage) to check in for attendance.

12. Sometimes competitions are combined between age categories, depending on the number of registered dancers. Ask questions if you do not see a competition number posted behind a stage. The backstage attendance/check in people are the ones to ask about conflicts.
13. Sometimes, conflicts occur between competitions. Your dancer may be competing on one stage and being called to compete on another. Speak to the stage people immediately, either at a speaker's podium (front of stage) or dancer check in backstage. They can often advise the other stage of the conflict and resolve the problem.
14. The dancer must wait in the backstage area until dancers are called for their competition. Dancers are called on stage and dance that specific competition. If they dance in the next competition, they will leave the stage, re check in, and return to the stage when called.

There may be many more dancers than stage area. Dancers may be asked to wait backstage or stand in a second or third row of dancers. Be aware of this when counting the total number of dancers in a competition for your Feis record sheet.

Shoe changes are required. Time is usually allowed for a shoe change, however, if you are changing stages, be prepared to be rushed.

15. It is left to the dancers and parents to ensure they are at the correct Competition and stage when a specific competition happens. Welcome to confusion of the Irish Dance Feis.
16. If you miss a competition due to conflict, shoe change, etc. ask questions. Sometimes you are out of luck. Sometimes they can put you in a later competitor line-up if the stage is full.
17. At the end of or during a competition (when there is time), check results, pick up medals or trophies and record results on your Feis sheet.
18. Be aware that trophy competitions may be held on the next day and you may have to return to the Feis in the morning for more competitions.

### **11.5.2 Feis Etiquette**

A few notes about a Feis and rules of conduct.

1. Adjudicators sit at a table in front of the stage. It is highly disrespectful to walk in front of this table between the Adjudicator and the stage.

2. Do not speak to or distract an Adjudicator in any way.
3. The front row of chairs at any stage is reserved for teachers. They often move between stages to watch all of their students. Do not sit in these chairs.
4. Do not sit on the floor near Adjudicators. Conversations often increase in volume, distracting the Adjudicator from their concentration.
5. Chairs on each side of a stage are reserved for competing dancers and competition check in only. They are not “extra chairs”. Parents, siblings and others are not to be in this “on deck” area.
6. If a stage is empty, it is not a “practice stage”. Practice areas may be provided. Do not dance on a stage simply because it is not being used.

## **12 Competition Dress**

Dancers in their first year of competition usually wear jumpers or Class dresses.

As of September 2006, dancers may not wear a Solo dress in competition until the dancer reaches the Novice level. The Regent Parents' Association maintains “Class dresses” that are available for beginner and advanced beginner dancers.

Any dancer interested in purchasing solo dresses should consult with Mrs. Regent prior to purchasing the dress. She can provide advice on fit, colour and style.

### **12.1 Typical Competition – What do I wear?**

Dancers are expected to wear a complete dance costume at a competition. This includes:

- Poodle socks,
- Shoes (hard and soft),
- Jumper, Class dress or solo dress,
- Wig, curled hair or a bun

Note that the hair bun is worn by some dancers. This is a new style trend and is still being accepted by some judges. One of the things Adjudicators look for at a competition is “bouncing hair”.

## **12.2 Class Dress**

A Class dress is a unique dress, common to each dance school. All dresses in the school are the same pattern. These dresses are used for Figure Competition or by Beginner and Advanced Beginner level dancers.

## **12.3 Rental Dresses**

RAIDPA has a limited number of jumpers and Class dresses available each year to our students. Beginner or First Feis dancers commonly wear the jumper. Class dresses must be worn until a dancer reaches the Novice level.

All Class dresses are supplied with a crown and zippered dance bag for transport and protection. Dresses, crowns and bags must be returned at the end of each dance year for cleaning and inventory. Any dress that is deemed to be excessively worn or returned in damaged condition (beyond normal wear and tear), will result in forfeiture of the damage deposit and the dancer will lose dress rental privileges.

Should a dress be returned in irreparable condition, the parent or dancer will be billed for the full replacement cost of the dress and the dancer will lose dress rental privileges for the next dance year.

## **12.4 Figure Competition**

Dancers competing in official figures competitions (i.e. 2, 3, 4, 6 or 8 hand) must have Class dresses. The Class dress must be worn for consistency of the competitive Figure group.

All other dance items remain the same (poodle socks, shoes and wig/curled hair).

Note that in figure competition; only 1 dancer wears the competition number. This number is a different number than dancers wear for Solo competition.

## **12.5 Solo Dress**

A Solo Dress is a dress completely unique in the Dance world. Just about every Feis competition has used Solo dresses for sale. It is well worth looking at the used rack for Solo dresses. Young dancers grow out of dresses and require replacement regularly.

Remember that a dancer must be at the Novice or above level to wear a Solo dress. Until then they must wear a Class dress.

Used dance dresses can be purchased at a Feis and often “recycled” on the used rack a year later when your dancer outgrows it.

Note that it is always worthwhile to try on a used dress for fit, then show to Mrs. Regent for her opinion for colour and fit.

Sometimes, it is simply not possible to find a dress that fits. There are many other places to find dresses, used and new on the Internet.

Sizing is very important, make sure you measure correctly and ask a lot of questions of the seller.

### **12.5.1 Used Dress Suggestions**

[www.dance-again.com](http://www.dance-again.com)  
[www.Ebay.ca](http://www.Ebay.ca)  
[www.irishdancingexchange.com](http://www.irishdancingexchange.com)  
[www.dancespirit-dresses.com](http://www.dancespirit-dresses.com)  
[www.elevationdesign.ie](http://www.elevationdesign.ie)

### **12.5.2 New Dress Suggestions**

[www.Ebay.ca](http://www.Ebay.ca)  
[www.spiritofireland.ca](http://www.spiritofireland.ca)  
[www.dancinginceltic.com](http://www.dancinginceltic.com)  
[www.irishdancingshop.com](http://www.irishdancingshop.com)  
[www.irishthreads.com](http://www.irishthreads.com)  
[www.spiritofireland.ca](http://www.spiritofireland.ca)  
[www.threadsofgreen.ie](http://www.threadsofgreen.ie)  
[www.paulkeith.co.uk](http://www.paulkeith.co.uk)

### **12.5.3 Other Items Required**

Along with a dress, other items are necessary for shows and competitions.

The Regent Parents' Association maintains a used shoe inventory. The inventory of shoes is held on consignment.

Shoes are often outgrown and they are given to the Used Shoe Coordinator. Most shoes are in good shape, they simply no longer fit the previous owner. They are usually a lower cost than new shoes. Contact the used Shoe Coordinator via the Regent website, <http://www.regentacademy.ca/for%20sale.htm> Email address of the used shoe coordinator is on that page.

Other items including,

- Shoes – hard and soft,
- Laces,
- Poodle socks,
- Wigs,
- Dress bags,
- Music,

Are available from a local supplier, Bob Steele. His company name is Steele Celtic Dancewear. Bob's website is <http://www.irishdanceshoes.com/>

They are also available at most Feiseanna and on the Internet.

## **13 Dance Shows and Performances**

### **13.1 Irish Culture**

Regent Academy dancers promote Irish Culture by participating in dance shows throughout the year.

Regent dancers have appeared in many shows and performances in and around Calgary. Notable shows have included:

- 1988 Winter Olympics opening ceremonies,
- 1998 World Police and Fire Games,
- Calgary Oilman's Convention,
- World Rotary Convention
- Globalfest,
- 2005 Alberta Centennial Celebrations
- 2005 re opening of the Jubilee Auditorium
- Canada Day celebrations

Regent Dancers performs regularly at such venues as:

- Heritage Park
- Fort Calgary
- Prince's Island Park
- Irish Cultural Centre
- Calgary Farmer's Market
- McMahon Stadium
- Canada Olympic Park
- Spruce Meadows

- Calgary and area St. Patrick's Day celebrations

Regent Dancers perform at many Senior's homes in and around Calgary.

## **13.2 Shows and Performances**

Dancers from the Regent Academy perform in various shows throughout the year at nursing homes, festivals, corporate functions and St. Patrick's Day celebrations.

Shows offer the opportunity to promote the Irish Culture. They are great fun and confidence boosters for dancers. Dancers gain experience at performing on stage, in front of an audience. This provides excellent practice for Feis competition.

Shows are usually performed during the evenings or on weekends. A show lasts from 20 to 40 minutes and requires the dancer to wear a complete dance costume.

To participate in shows, a dancer must be proficient in all positions of the following dances:

- The Rose of Tralee
- The 2 Hand Reel
- The 3 Hand Reel
- St. Patrick's Day (show version)

It is vital that a dancer know all positions of each dance to enable the Show Coordinator to choreograph shows that sustain our reputation for excellence. When a dancer is ready to begin participating in shows, Mrs. Regent will forward his or her name to the Show Coordinator to be placed on the show list.

Once on the show list, a dancer is expected to perform a minimum of 10 shows each year, contributing to the Parents' Association show troupe.

A dancer begins performing at Nursing Homes and other small venues. As experience is gained and dancers increase their dance repertoire, they will be included in shows at larger venues.

## **13.3 Notice of Shows**

The Show Coordinator sends out notice of shows by email to all PA members. The notice of show will include the date, location and time of the show and a cut off deadline for response.

An email response shall be returned to the Show Coordinator in a timely manner (before the cut-off deadline) if the dancer wishes to participate in the show. If the Show Coordinator does not receive a reply by the cut off deadline, it will be assumed that the dancer will not be attending.

If for any reason the dancer cannot attend a show where he or she was scheduled, the dancer must notify the Show Coordinator immediately so that a replacement may be found.

### **13.4 Show Dress and Attire**

Dancers are expected to wear the complete dance costume. This includes:

- Poodle socks,
- Shoes (hard and soft),
- Jumper, Class dress or solo dress,
- Wig or curled hair.

Suggestion for show dress – our audiences like to see the detailed and elaborate solo dresses. Beginner level dancers may not have a solo dress yet.

There are many low cost used dresses on the market. Parents may consider purchasing one of these dresses for show performances.

Dancers are not permitted solo dresses in competition until they reach the Novice level, however, they may wear a solo dress at a show.

### **13.5 The Show itself**

Dancers are expected to arrive 30 minutes before scheduled show performance time. This allows dancers to go over the show program, change into their dress, shoes, socks and wig.

The Show Coordinator will outline and describe the show, dances and assignments. If necessary, last minute adjustments may be made to the show and dancer position.

It is expected that dancers will accept any assigned position within their dance experience. The show coordinator assigns dances based on height matching, the specific dance step and dancer experience.

## **14 The Gala Performance**

RAIDPA and Regent Dancers host an annual show “Gala Performance” each spring at the University of Calgary Theatre. This show is open to parents, grandparents, siblings, relatives and the public.

The Gala is a great opportunity for all Regent dancers to display their talent and promote the Irish heritage to family, friends and the public in a professional setting.

The Gala is open to the general public and students are encouraged to invite family members, friends, teachers, etc. to the performance.

All dancers are encouraged to participate and to attend classes leading up to the Gala and any additional Gala practices set to rehearse show numbers. The Gala is a setting where new dancers, who may not yet be participating in shows or Feis competition, have the opportunity to dance and perform in front of an audience.

More information on the Gala is available on the Regent website, <http://www.regentacademy.ca/gala.htm>

## **15 Bursaries**

Dancers who are members of and in good standing with RAIDPA and who have qualified to dance at the North American or World Championships are eligible to apply for a bursary. Qualification to attend a competition is per An Coimisiun rules and success at the Western Canadian Oireachtas. A bursary application will be provided to qualified dancers.

Bursary cheques are issued upon presentation of the following:

1. Bursary application form, completed and signed by Mrs. Regent
2. Volunteer points form showing number of shows and point earned throughout the dance year.
3. Show participation statement. A minimum of 10 show performances are required from each dancer.
4. Attach a copy of your travel itinerary, or copy of your airline ticket.

### **15.1 Bursary Application – World Competition**

Bursary applications for attendance at the World Irish Dance Competition will be issued to qualified Dancers following the Western Canadian Oireachtas in November.

The completed bursary application must be returned to RAIDPA Executive by February 1 of the dance year.

## **15.2 Bursary Application – National Competition**

Bursary applications for attendance at the National Irish Dance Competition will be issued to qualified Dancers following the Western Canadian Oireachtas in November.

The completed bursary application must be returned to the RAIDPA Executive by April 1 of the dance year.

Dancers qualifying at other times during the year will be discussed on a case-by-case basis by the RAIDPA Executive.

## **15.3 Qualification for Support**

Dancers must meet the following specific conditions throughout each dance year in order to receive a bursary:

- Member in good standing of RAIDPA
- Annual earned volunteer points as described in Section “10.5”, “Volunteer Point System”,
- Participation in the minimum number of shows as defined in Section 10.7, “Show and Performance Participation”,
- Participation in the annual Gala,
- Committed attendance at class,
- Commitment to individual practice,
- An overall positive attitude and dedication to the Regent Academy.
- Actual attendance at and participation in the sponsored event; the Nationals or Worlds competition,

All Regent dancers who receive bursaries to attend the North American and World Championships should be aware that the primary source of these funds is from shows.

Dancers who receive bursaries are therefore expected to actively participate in shows throughout the year and perform at the annual Gala.

Show dancers are expected to participate in a minimum of 10 shows (50 points) each year. This may sound like a lot, however, Regent Dancers performed at over 40 shows last year. There are many opportunities to perform at shows.

## **15.4 Bursary Amounts**

The Parents' Association members and Executive jointly set bursary monetary contributions. Amounts may be changed from time to time as permitted by RAIDPA finances.

Dancers will be expected to acknowledge their acceptance of these conditions in the form of a signed contract with RAIDPA. The contract will be distributed with the Bursary application form. No dancer will receive a bursary without a signed contract and acknowledgement of bursary award conditions.