



**To:** Bus Companies

**From:** Janet Murray – GM/CAO

**Date:** August/September

## **Re: Purple Band Program**

STEO is excited to once again be coordinating the **Purple Band Program** for junior and senior kindergarten students.

The Purple Band Program provides an effective means to help protect the tiniest travelers – our junior and senior kindergarten passengers. Simply, a Purple Band is placed by the school around the handgrip on the top of a kindergarten student's backpack. This band, in conjunction with an awareness program for school staff, parents and school bus drivers, helps to ensure that our junior and senior kindergarten students will be met at the bus stop.

The Purple Band Program helps bus drivers more easily identify junior and senior kindergarten students with a glance. **The purple band is a quick visual tool that tells bus drivers that the student with a tagged backpack needs their special attention, as well as guardian supervision at the drop-off point.**



## The **School Bus Driver** plays an important role in the **Purple Band Program**, which includes:

- Remembering the meaning of the band – **Purple equals Parent**;
- Identifying kinder children by their school bag's purple band as they board the bus;
- Keeping kinder students at the front of the bus, ahead of older students;
- Learning to recognize a student's parents/guardians who meet them at the stop;
- Keeping kinder students on the bus if their guardian is not there to meet them;
- Contacting dispatch for instructions while reassuring the student;
- Delivering the student into the care of school staff in a timely manner, if a parent cannot be reached.

## **Personnel at the Bus Company – Managers and Dispatchers**

Staff at the bus company have an opportunity to work together with bus drivers, schools, guardians and STEO to ensure that our kindergarten students get home safely. These responsibilities include:

- Reaching out to contact the parent/guardian and providing guidance to the driver when a student is not met and remains on-board the vehicle;
- Advising STEO and the school that a student was not met;
- Advising STEO when and where the student was eventually delivered;
- Training new and spare drivers in all aspects of the Purple Band program.

STEO assumes the coordination role in the Purple Band Program, working with schools, bus companies and parents/guardians to support effective program delivery. We at STEO sincerely appreciate your participation in this awesome program and we encourage bus companies to contact us with feedback.

**PURPLE IS POWERFUL!**

