

## **Prepared by Dr. Jeffrey Alstadt**

### **Approval of 2026-2029 Shared Transportation Agreement with Woodland CUSD #5**

Streator Elementary School District #44 is the largest participating district in a shared transportation cooperative with Woodland CUSD #5, Streator High School, Grand Ridge, and Odell. We currently utilize 22 in-district routes and 7 out-of-district routes through this partnership.

#### **Background and Information:**

The administration presents for Board approval a renewal of the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) to cover the 2026-2027, 2027-2028, and 2028-2029 school years. Woodland CUSD #5 is preparing to execute a new three-year fleet lease. Transitioning to this new agreement now provides three specific high-level benefits to District #44:

#### **Strategic Rationale:**

- We will lock in our current payment rates for an additional three years, ensuring budget predictability.
- Renewing now allows us to secure 2021 model units before major EPA emission requirements take effect in 2027. This proactive move avoids a projected price increase of approximately \$20,000 per bus that would occur if we waited.
- The district upgrades to a newer fleet with no increase in lease payments.
- The new agreement transitions the shared fleet from gas to diesel engines, which will provide superior fuel economy and long-term savings.
- The drivers have expressed a strong preference for diesel buses over the current gas fleet. This transition directly supports driver satisfaction and retention efforts.
- The new fleet eliminates the limited-use 66-passenger units. All new buses will be 71-77 passenger units, allowing for greater routing flexibility and reducing overcrowding risks

#### **Administrative Recommendation**

To secure these financial and operational advantages, the administration recommends the Board of Education approve the renewal of the Intergovernmental Agreement with Woodland CUSD #5 for the 2026-2029 school years.