



## Executive Summary Finance Committee Meeting

DATE: July 22, 2021

TOPIC: Newsela Essentials Renewal 2021-2022

PREPARED BY: David Russo

### **Recommended for:**

- Action
- Discussion
- Information

### **Purpose/Background:**

The Board approves all contracts.

Newsela is a website that provides a range of articles on current events or relevant topics in English/language arts, science, math, and social studies. Articles are presented in five different reading levels; which students can select to best meet their needs. Vocabulary is adjusted to allow the information to be more accessible to students. Articles contain information that is high interest, which can supplement students' understanding of a topic.

Newsela Essentials allows teachers to track performance on reading assignments, create custom instructions and activities, annotate articles for students, and access professional development. Additionally, this subscription affords access to teacher resources for all current events articles and student activities to build comprehension and engagement. Students read over 35,000 articles on the platform in the 2020-2021 school year.

District Legal Counsel reviewed the Customer Agreement and suggested an automatic subscription renewal clause be eliminated from the Terms. Newsela agreed to take this clause out.

Additionally, the District requested the vendor eliminate clauses related to arbitration, change the state law governing the Agreement to Illinois, and the venue of any potential litigation to the Circuit Court of Cook County, Illinois. Newsela agreed to each of the requests. These were the same changes made to the Customer Agreement in 2020-2021.

Finally, Counsel drafted an Amendment addressing the new Student Online Personal Protection Act (SOPPA). The vendor agreed to the Amendment, which is included in the Committee packet.

**Fiscal Impact:**

The cost of a one -year subscription to Newsela Essentials for Todd Hall, Rutledge Hall, and Lincoln Hall is \$9,600.00. The subscription cost \$8,990.00 in the 2020-2021 school year. The fee will be offset by Title I grant funds.

**Recommendation:**

It is the Administrative recommendation that the Finance Committee concurs to recommend to the Board of Education to approve this Customer Agreement from Newsela for Newsela Essentials in the amount of \$9,600.00 from August 6, 2021 to August 5, 2022.