

# Net neutrality debate resurfaces amid repeal

## Students and faculty discuss potential effects of internet deregulation

### Fast facts

on net neutrality

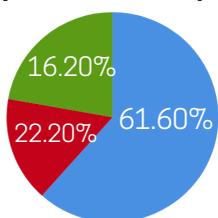
burke howe • DESIGNER

**76%** of Americans support net neutrality as a law

**3/5** of the FCC voted to repeal net neutrality

**21** states have sued the FCC in an effort to stop the repeal

**Do Ladue students think net neutrality should be repealed?**



■ Yes      ■ No  
■ I don't know enough about it

Survey results based on 192 voluntary student responses

adam **RUSH**  
news editor

In 2015, the Federal Communications Commission wrote into law requirements for internet regulation that became known as net neutrality.

The intent of the law was to ensure that the internet would remain an open and free platform, meaning that internet providers such as AT&T or Comcast could not raise prices or slow speeds for users in order to hurt smaller websites. The FCC repealed net neutrality Dec. 14, but debate continues about whether it was the right course of action.

Instructional Technology Coordinator Adam Stirrat believes that a rollback of the law can only maintain the status quo or have harmful effects for the school. However, there have been no administrative meetings on the subject, as the school determined that there is not enough conclusive information about internet providers' plans to be concerned.

"There is not enough concrete information for [students] to start worrying and panicking," Stirrat said. "But we can't promise anything not knowing what the pricing will be ... If prices become outrageous, there could be a moment where the district has to promise less connectivity."

Due to net neutrality's current prominence, Ladue clubs Young Democrats and Young Republicans have devoted meetings to discussing deregulation and its potential consequences. While Young Democrats members were unified in believing that a repeal should not take place, Young Republican members were split on the issue.

"A lot of people took the position that net neutrality is regulating a monopoly industry, and that's why it needs regulation," junior and club president Tripp Lochmoeller said. "[I feel] a deregulation will create more competition. [Some see this] as a keystone of where politics is at today, but I don't believe a repeal will be as detrimental as a lot of people do."

At meetings, Young Democrats members came to the consensus that

rescinding net neutrality regulations can only be harmful for the internet and those who require it on a daily basis. Senior and Young Democrats president Emma Ross feels as though there will be inevitable consequences for the internet and the Ladue School District as a whole.

"There is no benefit to not having net neutrality," Ross said. "It allows companies to pick and choose what their customers have access to. If [the school's] internet carrier one day decided to restrict access to certain educational sites, then where are we going to be? It's a possibility that [the school] could be affected."

Despite their political ideologies, both Lochmoeller and Ross see net neutrality as a complex topic on which discussion should continue to center. While they both consider the subject partisan, neither thinks that a conversation on the issue will hurt.

"More discussion is always helpful because people can change their minds," Lochmoeller said. "We are all mature and can handle other people's opinions. Debate is healthy, and it's good to discuss our differences. ❖"

## What is your opinion on the government repeal of net neutrality?



*"In my opinion, the internet is a business, and because America runs on a free market, [businesses] can do whatever they want. In other words, net neutrality regulates things that shouldn't be regulated."*

- Sophomore  
Frankie Goebel



*"I think it's awful that net neutrality is [being repealed]. The internet is a necessity for almost everyone in the world. It should be free for everyone and not messed with by private companies."*

- Junior  
Noah Melson



*"My opinion is that [net neutrality] definitely should not be repealed. It will make everything online cost way more, and if they raise prices for Google, I won't be able to afford to do my schoolwork."*

- Sophomore  
Olivia Dehaven



*"I am glad that Republicans have repealed net neutrality. Since the free market would indirectly limit companies from placing unreasonable prices on customers, it was an unnecessary government policy."*

- Freshman  
Matthew Levy

### In the Classrooms

#### Tech Theater



In Tech Theater, senior Aidan Morley draws a floor plan as if he is putting on a play of "The Outsiders" Jan. 18. In this class, the students learn how to draw and make a 3D model out of paper of a floor plan and how to make a lighting design. In addition, they help with building sets for theater production. (Photo by Rhiannon Rhoads)

#### Symphonic Band



In Band, sophomore Mindy LaMore (left) and freshman Melody Zhang (right) play the flute. "My favorite part of band is the people," LaMore said. "There are many different personalities in a band, and it is fun to interact and play with each [person]." (Photo by Rhiannon Rhoads)