Net Neutrality: Who Controls the Internet?

TOPIC: NETWORKING, ETHICS

GRADES: 6-8

SOFT SKILLS: COMMUNICATION, CRITICAL THINKING

Introduction:

- This is a lesson on Net Neutrality. There are many options for teacher choice, depending upon the background knowledge and level of students awareness in the classroom. All resources can be modified for student use.

Learning Outcomes:

- Students will define/describe the Net Neutrality issue.
- Students will analyze and verbalize the pros and cons of Net Neutrality and develop an opinion on the issues.

Activities:

1. This activity should begin with an overview of how the Internet works. This code.org video is a great introduction: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dxcc6ycZ73M
2. The teacher should then transition to the topic of Net Neutrality. The teacher may choose to discuss or a background reading could be assigned. *No sources are linked due to the constant evolution of the topic. A simple google search will yield the most recent results.*
3. Students should be required to develop an opinion on Net Neutrality. This can be done as a whole class discussion, charting the positives and negatives of Net Neutrality. Another option is a collaborative project in which students get assigned a side and must research in order to defend it. Lastly, students could be required to complete a structured in-class debate on Net Neutrality.

Enrichment/Follow-up:

- After the activity is complete, students could be asked to write a "letter to the editor" or a letter to a federal official explaining their individual stance on the issue. Although the net neutrality issue was decided by the FCC (and some states), the topic is still debated.