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As the teacher of the first k-12 classroom on the internet --at Davis Senior High School (before the "world-wide web" and thanks to UC Davis and Pac Bell) I would like to support the effort for equal internet access by treating it as a utility.

My computer science students were able to find out what was happening at Tiananmen Square, as well as the breakup of the USSR as they were happening. These two events sparked some spirited (and more knowledgeable) discussion in my classes and others at the school. Students had online discussions with university students in other countries and read newspapers from far-away places. They learned 3-dimensional geometry with graphics supported by use of a supercomputer at Lawrence Livermore.

We had major discussions during the writing of the "Gore II" bill to fund the internet in order to convince the government to support internet use by k-12 schools.

Now, at the school where my daughter teaches, her history and English Language classes explore museums, math and science articles and exhibits, have discussions with students in other locations, use online tutorials and post a school news program and fine arts publication on their site, among other projects.

Teachers often use their "spare time" to take online courses they could not otherwise attend to upgrade or reinforce their knowledge and skills.

Differentiated access based on the ability to pay for internet speed would undoubtedly impede classroom availability of a major resource as companies and others with more funds would certainly have the advantage thus handicapping schools and their students' education.