

Abstract

The Free Software philosophy are founded in the ideals of freedom, openness, and sharing. Producing software based on these ideals has great pragmatic benefits. Free Software is developed in the interest of its users instead of the owner of the software. This method of producing software benefits the entire community, and the software is of much higher quality due to the huge number of volunteer and paid contributors.

Educational institutions support the same ideals within academic freedom and the open dissemination of knowledge and information common in academia. For this reason, school systems have a special obligation to serve Free Software to their students other than the technological and ethical reasons that can apply to anyone. In addition, taxpayer money should not be spent to serve the interests of proprietary software vendors, nor should students be forced to use proprietary software at home in order to be able to get their work done. If students are to be prepared for the future, they should be exposed to Free Software, which continues to gain momentum at an increasing rate.

In working with the Newton Public Schools, specifically within Newton North High School, a number of ways to encourage and assist the adoption of Free Software have been considered. The Free Software community can be taken advantage of to gain support from those working within the school system. Once there is support from within, the task of upholding the values of academia by adopting Free Software can soon be achieved.