

Educating Tux: case studies of Linux deployments in high schools around the world

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Linux has a lot to offer cash-strapped education departments. It's free, for one thing. It is naturally secure with distinctly non-privileged accounts and it is easily centrally administered. However, the experiences by schools that have gone this route are a mixed bag. Let us investigate some and see what lessons there are.

Previously on ITWire my colleague Sam Varghese presented the remarkable tale of Strathcona Baptist Girls Grammar School. This school successfully implemented a large-scale Linux deployment across 350 workstations. The ability to spend on hardware was bolstered by a reduction in software and maintenance expenses as a direct consequence of switching to Linux (specifically Red Hat Linux, then Fedora.) The school reported a distinct decrease in administration work, a large reduction in downtime and no virus problems. You would think it was a resounding win.

Yet, six years later the school reverted back to Microsoft Windows. The reason for the change back was not technical nor was it financial. Instead the school's staff pressed for Windows due to their own familiarity with it.

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