Pete Deyo

3759 Silver Lake Rd., 49684, MI Traverse City

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Subject: Tech Security

Dear Governing Board,

As you may be aware from recent personal experience networked computers are vulnerable to attack from malicious software. Often these attacks are initiated by our own actions when we make uninformed decisions about what to allow your computers to do. There should be no shame in falling pray to these attacks as they are designed to doop. As humans we are fallible creatures, it is the very nature and beauty of our meta-cognition that allows us to be persuaded by non-factual stimuli. Let us take this fact of our thinking beyond survival to another level to make security decisions based on philosophical principles and hard fact.

The Windows operating system is the most prevalent piece of software the world over, making it a large target for the designers of malicious software. Its very proprietary and closed source nature make it a target for free thinking individuals as well as the criminal element. Windows itself is diseased and inhabits a philosophical world that is itself diseased. As public school comrades we should all see it as our goal to provide our students with a world free from proprietary knowledge. So lets say pip pip to the hackers and give Windows the old heave ho.

I am talking of course of that wonderful wonderland, Linux. There are many reasons that Linux provides a more secure environment. Firstly privileges, in Windows, users are generally given administrator access by default, which means they pretty much have access to everything on the system, even its most crucial parts. So, then, do viruses. With Linux, on the other hand, users do not usually have such "root" privileges; rather, they're typically given lower-level accounts. What that means is that even if a Linux system is compromised, the virus won't have the root access it would need to do damage system wide; more likely, just the user's local files and programs would be affected. Windows is also a mono-culture, one windows computer is the same as any other and that works about as well as we are finding it works in the natural world. Linux on the other hand has hundreds of different distributions each comprising different software and packages, even if one is targeted it is very unlikely to work on another. Creating our own distribution of Linux would make us virtually invulnerable to attack. Another boost to Linux security is the "Linus Law" named for Linus Torvalds the creator of Linux, which simply means this; given enough eyes, all bugs are shallow. In other words the large group of people working on this open source software will catch more flaws, so less flaws for hackers to exploit. Finally, linux has a different view of software installation. It is not harvested from random places on the Internet but from a tested repository of secure working code. In other words what we need is already in the library and our wonderful librarians have already vetted it for us to use. Good by search bars and Internet Explorer.

Linux is a vastly safer system that has an open position on knowledge and equal rights that is philosophically in harmony with the aims of public education. In this case the safe choice is the morally correct choice, a win, win for our district.

Sincerely,

Pete Deyo

WMS Art Teacher