



Office of Hon Steve Maharey, M.P. for Palmerston North
Minister of Education
Minister of Broadcasting
Minister of Research, Science and Technology
Minister for Crown Research Institutes
Minister Responsible for the Education Review Office

21 JUN 2007

Bevan Rudge
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Dear Mr Rudge

Thank you for your email dated 30 May 2007 regarding the provision of Microsoft funding for schools.

As you will have noted the Ministry of Education is providing Apple *iWork 06* to schools instead of MS *Office 2004*. Renaissance Education Division (the New Zealand agent for Apple) is providing *NeoOffice* to those schools who wish to use it in the classroom.

Schools in New Zealand are self-managing organisations and as such they are able to spend their funds with a high degree of flexibility. If schools wish to license copies of any product they are free to do so.

In this case Government has provided funding for the purchase of software for schools, not for the development of software. As such there is no provision to implement your suggestion of investing in the *NeoOffice* suite.

Ministry of Education officials in the e-Learning Unit are very aware of the global initiatives in the open source arena. This unit has just completed a successful \$12 million upgrade of 330 small schools networks using open source software. Open source solutions will certainly be considered in future policy work on funding of school software.

Thank you for your interest and I appreciate the time you have taken to contribute to this issue.

Yours sincerely

Steve Maharey
Minister of Education