Open source software is described as both:

Free as in ~~beer~~ pizza

(gratis: no cost)

and

Free as in speech

(libre: freedom/liberty)

Here are some **freedoms** that open source provides to schools:

Students free to reproduce their class or lab **work at home** or other places.
Instructors free from their schools **purchasing cycle**.
Students free to **distribute** the software where they work or at other places.
Schools free from software **budget shortfalls**.
Schools free from the need to **track software licenses**.
Schools free to use their **support resources** elsewhere.

(See the Gratis versus Libre article on Wikipedia)