Chapter 5.12
The Need for a Well–Managed Technology Infrastructure

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INTRODUCTION

As commonly defined, the “digital divide” means inadequate access to the Internet in urban or rural areas where telecommunications resources are limited or non-existent. This gap normally exists because of an insufficient economic incentive for investment by telecommunications providers. For educators, the digital divide means that students and teachers are unable to learn and apply the technologies most used by other educators, business, and industry in the information age because these technologies are not available. When there is inadequate access to the tools needed to learn and work in the information age, a barrier is placed between teachers, students, and successful achievement of learning goals.

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BARRIERS AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Barrier #1

Most of the nation’s school systems do not have a dependable, scaleable infrastructure to support high-quality, technology-centered school management, instruction, and assessment.

Another significant barrier, not immediately obvious or as politically charged as the “digital divide,” is an unreliable or unstable network infrastructure. Without a robust and scaleable infrastructure, a K-12 school will not be able to support the kind of technology-centered teaching and learning that should be occurring in today’s schools if we are to effectively prepare students to “be all that they can be” in today’s technology-rich society. The quality
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