

We have designed each “White Paper” to explore a fundamental educational principle and key issues engaging the education community we serve. It is our goal to partner with our readers as they meet the challenges they face.



Student Review, Testing & Assessment
CastleLearning.com



626 Layport Drive, Suite 100
Sebastian, FL 32958
800-345-7606
Fax: 772-581-1066

Prepared by Bill Ingui
President and Retired Educator

The IEP (Individual Education Plan) & Castle Learning Online

In many states, an **Individual Education Plan** or **IEP** is usually required for children who are special needs students or those who are gifted. This plan is most often a legal document written by the Special Education teacher or Gifted Education teacher with input from parents, administrators and other designated personnel. Such a plan assesses the student’s ability at certain grades and then plans for the future by setting goals and short-term objectives while outlining the services to be provided and the method of evaluation to be implemented.

To carry out the **IEP**, many teachers have found that *Castle Learning Online* can assist them in several ways:

- By providing extensive review materials that help improve a student’s knowledge base and skill level in core content areas, especially those in ELA and Mathematics.
- By allowing each student to work at his/her own pace.
- By providing a framework to set goals and short-term objectives for each student and class and to efficiently monitor progress towards reaching them throughout the year.
- By serving as a technology supplement to classroom instruction that allows teachers to adjust their own teaching styles as they learn where students are weakest.

Having worked in the classroom for over 33 years, I also realize that all teachers can use these features to design individualized plans for all students, including those who do not require an **IEP**. This broader definition draws the experienced teacher into framing *all* students in the scope of what an **IEP** can do for their students.

In short, *Castle Learning Online* addresses many of the characteristics that are needed for an **IEP**. Here is what some teachers have said about our program with regard to monitoring and evaluating student progress:

- By using *Castle Learning Online*, “I can identify students who have weaknesses and the students can use the questions that they got wrong to determine if we need to review the overall concept.”
- “The remediation students who take the time to look at the solution and self-correct will benefit.”
- *Castle Learning Online* “saves a lot of time in creating assignments and tests, saves time grading and getting feedback and helps them gain insight into strengths and weaknesses of students.”
- “By mixing the content of questions, I am able to consistently review all topics, not just one at a time.”
- Patti Sullivan, the Director of Technology at Hilton CSD in New York, said *Castle Learning Online* is “great for differentiation” of the curriculum content for each student.
- Several teachers also noted that they encourage students to self-generate questions for personal practice sessions and appreciate that they can monitor this work.

Castle Learning Online is an important component for teachers who are writing an **IEP**. Teachers can receive current, week-by-week information on the student’s progress, measuring how well students are progressing toward learning the content for the academic year. This weekly use of *Castle Learning Online* has been described as a Curriculum Based Measurement, which easily helps the educator determine whether a child’s performance is meeting the expectations envisioned in the **IEP**. This gives the teacher an opportunity to adopt new or different ways of teaching or to provide remedial assignments when necessary. Parents can support this plan when they too can access the student assignments and mentor their child through the more difficult areas.