Grounding Assumptions
of a Community of Practice focused on Assessments Aligned to the Common Core State Standards

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA ’04) ensures that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education (FAPE) that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment and independent living. [34 CFR 300.1(a)] [20 U.S.C. 1400(d)(1)(A)]

As a Community of Practice, we believe:

1) Success for all graduating students is defined as students who are prepared for success in the 21st century as evidenced by securing a job that includes a salary that can support living expenses in a career of choice.

2) Students can demonstrate academic and higher order thinking skills (problem solving, communication, interpersonal skills, time management, employability schools, etc.)

3) Common Core Standards are critically important as a basis for instruction as students prepare for further education, employment and independent living.

4) Access to core curriculum and interaction with non-disabled peers is critical to positive outcomes.

5) All youth are engaged in meaningful active learning school experiences that result in successful school and post school outcomes. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is employed within the learning and assessment process.

6) Assessments, including alternate assessments, must be developed to measure student progress.

7) The assessment process should be a flexible system that includes valid and reliable formative and summative assessment which informs decision making.

8) The outcomes of assessment should be used in positive ways to build educational communities.

9) Educators must be given resources, tools and time to adjust classroom practice, including the alignment of instructional materials that align to the standards.

10) A comprehensive and coordinated system of professional development, services and supports is essential.
11) Federal, state and district policies will need to be reexamined to ensure they support alignment of the common core standards and assessments with student achievement.

This document was generated within the IDEA Partnership by cross-stakeholders representing teachers, administrators, related service personnel, family members and youth, state education agencies, higher education, technical assistance providers, and assessment consortia.