MeTRC is presently engaged in a study with Texas and Oregon low performing middle school math students with learning disabilities in learning support classrooms. MeTRC is studying the relationship between writing, communication, metacognition, and math learning. Students are presently working with an interactive online math learning platform (DDI’s Math Learning Companion) that is introducing two networked learning tools: a “notebook” for note taking, reflection, and two-way communication with the instructor; as well as a peer-to-peer communication and collaboration tool, called “The Wall.”

According to Bonnie Stewart, networked learning environments are different from traditional academic learning environments because they may not be bound by time and space, have the potential to facilitate and promote process focused learning over product focused learning, promote participation, engage peer-to-peer ties rather than only hierarchical ties, and facilitate self directed learning in lieu of institutionally directed learning. During the Best Practices presentation, MeTRC will be sharing the implementation experiences as well as discussing the effects of introducing these interactive communication tools and what it was like moving a traditional academic classroom toward a more networked learning environment, as well as the implications this may have for math learning among students with learning disabilities.