

Thomas B. Greenfield Dissertation Award Committee Report, 2021

Dear CASEA Colleagues

I am delighted to announce that the winner of CASEA's Thomas B. Greenfield Dissertation Award is Dr. Tiffany Bastin's (UNB) thesis titled: "Change theory and the Implementation of the 10-Year Education Plan: Impacts on Educators in the New Brunswick School System" (abstract below).

I would like to recognize Dr. Ken Brien, Tiffany's supervisor, from the University of New Brunswick for his superior supervision and mentorship.

Judges indicated Dr. Bastin's thesis presented a comprehensive theoretical approach to change theory both past and contemporary which provided a sound foundation to her work and drew upon the national and international change literature. Dr. Bastin identified similarities and differences across a wide range of change theories through a comparative approach which illustrated her capacity to see alignment, but also critical differences in the various theories and models she selected to support her study. Tiffany drew upon Dудар's (2017) Canadian research into fast-paced change and used the five components for successful rapid change: articulating a clear vision for change; high level sponsorship; involvement of stakeholders; preplanning and communication; and leadership. Dr. Bastin linked each of Dудар's components with other theorists' dimensions demonstrating nine linkages to Dудар's model. Dr. Bastin's critical thinking was demonstrated throughout the literature review. Her thesis was coherent and comprehensive. Her methodology was clearly articulated and aligned well with the research problem. Her academic honesty within her reflective stance assured credibility of her findings. Her findings emphasized the importance of change participants genuine involvement in the change initiative. The research resulted in five key themes that emerged across all data sources, revealing insights related to implementation and system stability, leadership, balanced literacy and change, literacy success, and social capital. Her findings related to the concept of "social capital" where she presented a detailed analysis of three access routes (or barriers) to social networking; teachers' capital, influences on access, and silos within the system. Her research documents the preferred supports during change processes for those holding different roles and responsibilities. The synthesis of her research was represented in her model of "Misdirected Funnel of Change Implementation" which highlighted the 'principal as protector', 'influence on decision making', 'social capital', and 'political interference' in a unique conceptualization. Overall her writing demonstrated care and attention to scholarly writing expectations and APA protocols.

I would like to take the opportunity to express my deepest appreciation for the comprehensive and thoughtful adjudication by the members of the 2020 Greenfield Award Committee of the three nominations.

Dr. Sharon Friesen (University of Calgary)

Dr. Carol Harris (University of Victoria)

Dr. Peng Liu (University of Manitoba)

Thomas B. Greenfield Dissertation Award Winner 2021



Dr. Tiffany Bastin

Winner of the Thomas B. Greenfield Dissertation Award 2021.

Thesis Title: Change theory and the Implementation of the *10-Year Education Plan*: Impacts on Educators in the New Brunswick School System.

This study examined the implementation of the New Brunswick *10-Year Education Plan* through a change theory lens to identify its related impacts on a number of educators across the system. Participants included classroom teachers, school principals, district staff, a Superintendent of Schools, and Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) personnel.

A case study approach was used to focus specifically on Grade 2 teachers and their implementation of literacy practices intended to improve learning outcomes for students. Methods of data collection included individual participant interviews, observations, and analysis of various documents related to EECD literacy expectations for Grade 2 teachers. Documents included surveys administered to educators related to the literacy expectations.

Five themes emerged from the data: system instability, varied perspectives on change process, the importance of leadership support, definitions of literacy success, and the impact of

social capital as significant factors in implementing a systemic change effort. Recommendations included: 1) diminish political interference, 2) increase social capital for teachers, 3) improve communication support, 4) examine more holistic ways to measure success for students, and 5) expand and personalize change leadership across government. New offerings to the change literature include identifying the most helpful supports when implementing change for individuals who hold different roles within a system, and how social capital and relationships among individuals during a large-scale change may impact the change effort's overall outcome.

Congratulations Tiffany!

Warmest regards

Shelley

Chair, CASEA's Thomas B. Greenfield Dissertation Award Committee

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