

# Deborah J. Amend, Ph.D.

[amendd1@nku.edu](mailto:amendd1@nku.edu)

---

*I am an Assistant Professor of Special Education who has worked as an education instructional coach, licensed intervention specialist, and music teacher with demonstrated success in publishing, teaching in self-contained and inclusion settings, providing both group and individualized instruction, in public, private and parochial settings, kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> + grades.*

## Education

### Doctor of Philosophy in Education and Social Change

Bellarmino University Louisville, Kentucky

Dissertation: A Collaborative Framework for the Inclusion of Students with Extensive Support Needs

August 2019-  
May 11, 2024

### Master of Arts in Multicultural Special Education

Mount Saint Joseph University

August 2011-  
December 2013

### Bachelor of Music in Music Education

The College-Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati

August 1991-  
June 1995

## Employment History

### Assistant Professor of Special Education

Northern Kentucky University

June 2024-  
Present

### Elementary Special Education Instructional Coach

West Clermont School District Pre School- 5<sup>th</sup> grade, mild- extensive support needs

August 2022-  
2024

**Intervention Specialist**

North College Hill Secondary Campus, Cincinnati, Ohio

August 2014-  
August 2021

Taught students under all categories of IDEA  
Launched and maintained a work-study program  
Created a systematic reading intervention for students with ID  
Created life skills cooking, work, and budgeting curriculum  
Moved students from paper-based to computer-based applications  
Oversaw 10+ transition plans annually  
Oversaw paraprofessionals schedules, duties and training  
Collaborated with general education teachers and special services  
Leader, 2 years, building wide PBIS Team  
Differentiated instruction to a range of neurodiverse students  
Conducted Functional Behavioral Assessments  
Proficient in Board Maker, Symbol Stix, I-ready, IXL  
Proficient in Google and Microsoft Products  
IEP, BIP grades 5-12+ creation and implementation

**Music Teacher**

Saint Vivian School

August 2012-  
August 2014

Development of general music curricula aligned with CCS  
Doubled the annual number of performances from 2 4  
Founded a competitive concert choir  
Coordinated concerts, competitions, special events  
Taught music history through school wide activities

**RESA Mentor Teacher, Author, Writer, Parent and Teacher Trainer**

Self-Employed

August 2006-  
August 2018

Published adoption memoir, *A Dress for Anna*  
Child advocacy articles published in local and national publications  
Disability and poverty advocacy articles in national syndications  
Creator of parent and teacher workshops, taught in the US and abroad

**Owner, Teacher**

White Oak Piano Studio

June 2000-  
January 2006

Created an inclusive piano and music theory course of study k-adult  
Created and implemented a PBS based piano method for students with autism  
Produced 3 annual recitals  
Produced competitive piano students with local and regional honors

**Adjunct Faculty**

Cincinnati Christian University

January 1998-  
August 2002

Courses taught: *Music Methods for Elementary Age Children* and *Music Ministry in the Community*  
Evaluated and selected instructional materials  
Created collaborative observation programs with local elementary schools

Collaborated with accreditation team for the creation of a Music Education program

### **Music Teacher**

Purcell Marion High School

August 1995-  
August 1998

Music and Humanities (inclusive), Music Theory

Beginning and Advanced Band (inclusive)

Increased annual performance opportunities from 2-6

### **Accomplishments**

Co-Founder and Director of the Adaptive Music Project and Cincinnati Adaptive Music Camp

Volunteer Disability Support, Mission of Hope International, Nairobi, Kenya, Summer 2013

Volunteer Disability and Adoption Trainer, My Home, Kherson, Ukraine, 2007

Co-Founder and Leader, Christian Adoptive and Foster Families, 1999-2015

*Angels in Adoption Congressional Award*, 2017

*You Make a Difference Award*, NCH High School, 2018

*Cooter Social Justice Award*, Bellarmine University, 2022

*Cooter Social Justice Award*, Bellarmine University, 2024

### **Affiliations**

Council on Exceptional Children (DARTS, TED, Kentucky Divisions)

National Association of Special Education Teachers

### **Publications and Presentations**

Amend, D. (2009). *A dress for Anna: The story of the redemption of the life of a Ukrainian orphan*. CSS Publishing, Lima.

Amend, D. (2005). Challenging behavior. *Children's Voice: The Child Welfare League of America*, July.

Amend, D. (2012). The gift of tomorrow: Ukrainian-American partnerships work towards a Ukraine without orphans. *Prism Magazine*, (5)28-33.

Amend, D. (2014). Breaking down barriers: Piano study for ALL students. *Clavier Companion*, July/August, 29-31.

Amend, D. (2024, September 27). *Using a collaborative framework for the inclusion of students with extensive support needs* [Conference Presentation]. KATE Conference, Highland Heights, Kentucky, United State.

Amend, D., & Englert, P. (2022), January 16-19). *Exploratory study of the lived experience of families of children with intense needs* [Poster session]. CEC National Conference, Orlando, FL, United States.

Amend, D., & Nobel, M. (2022, June 15-17). *Using the models of disabilities to challenge deficit thinking and create more inclusive classrooms* [Conference presentation]. Ohio CEC/CCBD State Conference, Cincinnati, OH, United States.