



## Amanda M. Schneck

National Board Certified Teacher

How she “Took the LEAP”



Amanda Schneck, National Board Certified Teacher (NBCT), has been an Early Childhood NBCT since 2014. Inspired to become Board Certified by her strong belief that teachers have to be lifelong learners, Amanda was soon disheartened to observe the general lack of awareness about National Board Certification in her district. To address this gap, Amanda applied to become a Virginia NBCT Agent of Change for Education (ACE) through the Leading Empowering, and Advocating for the Profession (LEAP) project, which aims to build the capacity of NBCTs to address pressing policy challenges related to teacher shortages and teacher diversity.

Recognizing the dire need to promote equity and diversity in our schools, Amanda serves on the Henrico County Public Schools Equity and Diversity Committee in Virginia - which discusses the geographical county divide between east and west in terms of equity and diversity access. Committed to promoting cultural competency, she also dedicates time to running a community book club centered on educating students on overcoming stereotypes, and teaches English to students around the globe.

The Virginia LEAP team began their advocacy journey by reviewing the state’s Every Student Succeeds Act report, where they found that to support their observations that due to teacher shortages and inequitable resources across the state, there is a significant gap in access to experienced and highly-effective teachers for students from high-poverty and high-minority schools. The VA NBCT LEAP team decided to be the change they wished to see. They had a “heat map” created to visually illustrate the inequities in Virginia students’ access to accomplished, Board-certified teachers, and then recruited eight ACEs, including Amanda, to raise awareness and inspire action with teachers, principals, and superintendents across the state.

As an ACE, Amanda led classes and seminars in regions of the state where students lack equitable access to Board-certified teachers, encouraging teachers throughout Virginia to take the “LEAP” and become Board certified. She also engaged regional representatives and state legislators to advocate for support for teachers to pursue Board certification (e.g., salary increases and stipends, fee support, and candidate support). Amanda continues to work tirelessly to identify schools that currently do not have NBCTs and to educate staff on the benefits of becoming Board-certified and mentoring and coaching teachers through the Board-certification process.

As a result of this work, the district of Petersburg has committed to assisting every teacher in becoming Board-certified! The next goal is reaching the critical mass of NBCTs needed to significantly improve Virginia’s education system statewide.

—The Leading, Empowering, and Advocating for the Profession (LEAP) project is generously supported by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation

“National Board Certification gave me the opportunity to become a lifelong learner. Joining a movement to address our workforce challenges by raising awareness and advocating for more teachers to become Board Certified is one of the most rewarding experiences I’ve ever done. Why wouldn’t you want to be a part of it?”

– Amanda Schneck, NBCT



**NATIONAL BOARD**  
for Professional Teaching Standards®

Are YOU ready to take the LEAP? Visit [nbpts.org](http://nbpts.org) to become Board-Certified or become an NBCT advocate for YOUR students!