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# Hey Shawnta! As a Former School Administrator, What Are Some Red Flags for Potential Teaching Candidates?



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by Shawnta S. Barnes [f](#) [X](#) [in](#) [✉](#)

## ***Hey Shawnta!***

***As a former school administrator, what are some red flags for potential teaching candidates?***

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Before I was a school administrator, I served on numerous interview committees. Typically, there were numerous candidates for the job. So, of course, we had to narrow down the pool. Being a member of an interview team, you only get to help interview and give feedback to the interview committee chair. As an administrator, you select the candidates to interview.

# **Missing Qualifications**

The first red flag is when the resume is bounced by the system. This means an area that must be on the resume isn't there, or there are some needed qualifications that the candidate did

not show that they had. I always looked through the bounced resumes, but I rarely moved any bounced resumes out of the trash bin.

## Poor Spelling and Grammar

If the resume gets past the system check, my next red flag is misspelled words and poor grammar. As a former English teacher, I always ended up being part of English teacher interviews. How will you teach standard English and proper writing when you can't even submit a polished resume?

## No Administrator References

Another red flag is when there are no references from administrators. I don't have all my former admin on my reference list, but you should at least have one, especially if you have been in more than one school. Speaking of references, if the reference, when contacted, only really wants to confirm they worked with the person and does not really elaborate, the reference probably doesn't know they are listed, or they don't have the heart to tell the truth about the candidate.

**Let's also talk about the interview.**

## The Interview Is Lacking

The candidate should be able to clearly explain what assets he or she possesses as a teacher that would add value to the school and bonus points when the candidate connects his or her experiences to the mission and vision of the school. When the candidate can't even sell themselves, why would the school want to make a job offer? I have found when candidates can't sell themselves, they aren't reflective enough to know what they are really good at. Teachers need to be reflective practitioners.

Honestly, the truth is this: It is all just a gamble. A candidate could have no red flags, get hired, and be an absolute nightmare. A candidate that wasn't as strong could end up being way better than expected.

So, please take these red-flag suggestions with a grain of salt.

***Shawnta***

## **Shawnta S. Barnes**

Shawnta (Shawn-tay) S. Barnes, also known as Educator Barnes, is a married mother of identical twin boys. She navigates education from not only the educator's perspective but also the parent's perspective. She has been an educator for nearly two decades. Shawnta works with K-12 schools, universities, & education adjacent organizations through her education consulting business Blazing Brilliance. She is an adjunct college professor, supervises student teachers, Indy Kids Winning Editor-in-Chief, Brave Brothers Books Co-founder, & CEO, and Brazen Education Podcast host. She holds five education licenses: English/language arts 5-12, English to speakers of other languages P-12, library/media P-12, reading P-12, and school administration P-12, and she has held a job in every licensed area. Previously, she has served as a school administrator, English teacher, English learners teacher, literacy coach, and librarian.

She won the 2019 Indiana Black Expo Excellence in Education Journalism Award. In 2023, she completed her doctorate in Literacy, Culture, and Language Education with a minor in Learning Sciences. She is an urban gardener in her spare time and writes about her harvest-to-table journey at [gardenershicole.com](https://www.gardenershicole.com). To learn more about Shawnta, visit [educatorbarnes.com](https://www.educatorbarnes.com).

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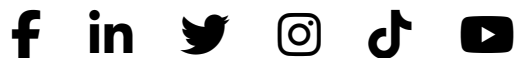
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