

Wv strikes: future teacher perspective

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I am writing this as the calendar on my laptop screen reads March 2nd. I haven't stepped a foot into my high school to see and learn by my teachers since February 22nd. My teachers have been on strike since February 22nd. All teachers, in all 55 counties across the Mountain State, have been striking since February 22nd. There have been posts, articles, videos, and more circling the internet about the teacher strike in West Virginia. The school cancellations in West Virginia. There have been posts about how the students feel. Posts about how the teacher feel, but what about the students who desire to be educators themselves. How does this affect them, and does it change their minds? Sadie P.

, high school senior, plans on furthering her schooling by getting a degree in education. She also plans to be a teacher in the Mountain State. She has had wonderful teachers that have inspired her to be an educator, teachers like Pamela Parsons, her ninth grade English teacher " I want to be an elementary special education teacher. Ultimately, I want to learn sign language and get my autism certification, so I can teach young students with autism," said Sadie. However, the strike is affecting her education.

The strike is causing a long break in the second semester. As a senior, there are a lot of things Sadie needs to cross off her to-do list. Scholarships. Letters of Recommendation. She desires to learn important life skills before beginning her journey into furthering her education.

She wants to be confident starting her next chapter, and she needs her teacher's support to finish out high school and head off to college. However, Sadie does support the educators all around West Virginia as they fight for

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what they believe in. Sadie has been rallying and striking alongside her teachers, as a future teacher herself, she feels that it is a necessity to do so. Aneyla Dozier is a future teacher, as well. In fact, she is working on her degree at this exact moment.

She studies at Shepherd University as a college freshman. Although she hasn't had the time to stand on the picket lines with West Virginia teachers, she remains proud of their willingness to take a stand for themselves. " I have never seen a better up-close example of a community rallying for change than the one I'm seeing right now, right in my back yard, said Dozier, " I see strength, and I see perseverance, and I see a group of heroes who care about their students and want to be in the best position possible to provide love and care for them." Dozier has always wanted to work with children, not necessarily elementary aged children, though. She has had numerous of opportunities to volunteer in Berkeley County primary schools, as well as the Boys and Girls Club. Dozier has always been interested in working with and inspiring the youth.

" I see so much potential within them and I can't stand the thought of them not seeing it, too," said Dozier. Dozier plans to be in the classroom as an English teacher teaching at a high school level. She is a very talented writer and enjoys literature- it's her favorite form of art. Paired with her love for children and language arts, it would only make sense for her to be in the classroom before students, educating them about what she's passionate about. " Already, my biggest joy in life is that light bulb moment.

When a student tries and tries and tries and doesn't succeed, but you're able to stand beside them and encourage them to try and try and try, and then try just one more time. And the light in their eyes when they do it- when they get it- there is nothing else in the world that I have experienced that can fill you with that amount of contentment that fast," said Dozier.

Originally, Dozier thought she wanted to be a Child Psychologist. She knew she wanted to help people, and for a while that seemed like the best way to do it- until she stepped into Mr. Donato's classroom. And then Mrs.

Salfia's classroom. And then Mrs. Hilliard's classroom. All teachers who educate students. Ironically, Dozier's Psychology teacher is the first person who inspired her to be an educator. "The way he taught made not only the subject matter interesting, but he also made the art of teaching clear to me for the first time.

He was teaching more than brain matter and mental illness. He was teaching us how to be good people," said Dozier. It was hard to be in a room with any of the three minds mentioned above, the three minds such as Jessica Salfia, Karla Hillard, and Andrew Donato, and for Dozier to not realize the full extent of power and opportunity that lies within the teaching profession. "We need to stop marginalizing this profession [teaching]. Where else can you combine critical thinking with crafts? Where else can you find young boys sitting in a circle talking about poetry? Where else can you fume and laugh and weep, in the same room, in the same day? In a home. And for some students, that school, that classroom, that teacher is the closest they'll ever get to experiencing a home.

Teachers don't just teach times tables and the Boston Tea Party. They teach respect, to all people. They teach compassion, for all people. They teach equality, with all people," said Dozier. But with the strikes happening, the carelessness of our governor, and the insurance along with pay issues, do these future teachers still plan to teach in West Virginia. It's so wild, do they still see the wonderful that lies in the Mountain State? " Teaching in West Virginia has always been my plan after graduate school, but I'd be lying if I said there wasn't a time when that twenty-five-minute drive for twenty-five thousand more dollars a year sounded tempting.

I've been able to put aside the issue of pay because of the strong belief I have in my Mountain State, but that doesn't mean that teachers here don't struggle. They do, and I would, but the kids are always the priority. The kids are still the priority for those teachers who are outside waving their signs right now, said Dozier, " how do you expect them to take care of their students if they aren't taken care of themselves? They've done it for years, and they've done it well, but enough is enough. I still believe in West Virginia, but that doesn't mean I believe in its politics. It means I believe in its people." Even with the rallies and protests, Sadie is still firmly planted and devoted to being a teacher in West Virginia, as well.

" The strike does not change my mind. Yes, it saddens me that there have been no changes with PEIA [Public Employee Insurance Agency], but I think that if the teachers, future and current, stick together, we will see change happen," said Sadie. Sadie wants all future educators to follow their dream. No matter what the salary may look like, she wants others to know that teaching is inspiring others to reach their highest potential. If there was a <https://assignbuster.com/wv-strikes-future-teacher-perspective/>

child who wanted to be a teacher, Dozier would encourage them, as well. She would tell them that they could do it, they could be it, and that they are needed.

She would smile, and she would tell that child they made the most important decision in their life, and Dozier would tell them that they chose well. Dozier also has a message to all those across West Virginia who has been affected by the school cancellation. The parents. The students. The teachers. Those who support the actions of the educators in WV, and those who don't support those actions.

“ Being in college, it [the teacher strike] hasn't affected me in the sense of not being in class, but through interacting with other people and seeing others' views on social media, I've been able to see how it has affected others in my community. I'm sure it has been challenging for parents to find childcare, and I know that the parents actually put in a situation where this was their only option may not feel the same way about it that I do as an outsider looking in, but I have loved seeing parents walking with their children around my campus. I have loved sitting in classes with the woman who brought her son. I have loved high-fiving first graders that walk past me on the sidewalk. And teachers, I have tried my best to show your students the love and care that you would want them to have while you're out fighting.

While you're out fighting for them. Maybe you stepping back for a little while is the only way for people to really realize how much you do, how much you give. Another thing I've seen is the reaction of the high school students from

my county, from my school. And I have been so proud of you. And I have been so angry with you.

To those of you who understand this fight and are trying to share its significance with others, please, keep trying. Even when it seems useless, keep trying. Keep speaking. Your voices are necessary in this fight, too. To those of you who don't understand, who are angry, who care only about your summer vacation or the packet of work you had to complete in your teachers' absence, open your eyes.

Look up. Look outside of yourselves. If you look hard enough, you'll be able to see that what these teachers are doing does not contain one ounce of selfishness. Yes, they are fighting for their rights, but those rights affect you, too. How they are treated directly affects you, whether you realize it or not. Please, stand with them.

Please, admire them. And please, let them be your example for how to build a community that fights with utmost grace and dignity." -Aneyla Dozier