ON THIS DAY IN WEST VIRGINIA HISTORY
March 21

On March 21, 1980, about one-fourth of the state's teachers walked off the job in a one-day protest over the legislature's failure to approve a larger increase in salary.


Investigate the Document: (Charleston Gazette, March 21, 1980)
1. State the purpose of the article. Is it intended to inform, persuade, to explore an issue? Explain your response.

2. List three facts listed in the article. Which fact did you find the most significant?

3. Use your knowledge of West Virginia geography to answer the following:

4. If the community is in a county that participated in the walkout, mark (√). If the community is NOT in a county that participated in the walkout, mark (X).
   - New Martinsville ______
   - Wheeling ______
   - Parkersburg ______
   - West Union ______
   - Wellsburg ______

Think Critically: What is the meaning of a strike or walkout? What is the historical context for striking/walking out? What are three issues facing the education system in the U.S. today?
Teachers in 30 counties vote to walk out

By Betty Cook

Education associations in 30 counties have voted to participate in the planned statewide walkout of teachers at 1 p.m. today at Landfill Field.

Teacher groups in the other 25 West Virginia counties have voted not to participate, while seven counties have decided to send delegations representing their counties, without interrupting classes.

The walkout was called by the West Virginia Education Association to protest the ESEA pay raise. Delegates to the Legislature by the WVEA had requested a $3,000 raise.

Bill Rainey, WVEA communications specialist, said from 3,000 to 5,000 state teachers are expected at the rally today. "But, there is really no way of telling until 1 p.m.," he said.

Counties supporting today's walkout include Kanawha, Boone, Braxton, Cabell, Calhoun, Clay, Fayette, Doddridge, Gilmer, Lincoln, Logan, Martin, Marshall, Mason, Mercer, Mingo, Monongalia, McDowell, Nicholas, Ohio, Pendleton, Preston, Putnam, Randolph, Raleigh, Ritchie, Summers, Upshur, and Wood.

Officers of education associations in the counties of Greenbrier, Hampshire, Jackson, Jefferson, Mineral, Tucker and Wirt said delegations will be representing the counties at the walkout, but school systems will be open and other teachers will cover for those absent.

Jerry DeLace, vice president of the Tucker County Education Association, said teachers there feel that staying out of the classroom will not help things in Tucker County. "However, we do support the efforts of WVEA and the actions of the Legislature," as we will send a delegation of teachers, and their classes will be covered by other teachers.

Gerald Basset, president of the Hampshire County Association, said a group of teachers attending today's walkout have been "properly excused by the county board of education."

In Jefferson County, a delegation will attend the walkout by taking leave without pay, said Charles Kline. "To help with these teachers' loss of pay, other teachers are donating money to make up for the money that those attending the event will lose.

On the eve of the proposed walkout, state schools superintendent Roy Truby made a last minute appeal. He said schools would be open today and encouraged parents to send their children. He asked administrators to stand firm on the "no work, no pay" rule.
Teachers

Truby said the decision of whether to participate will have to be made by each teacher individually.

Kanawha County Superintendent Robert Kittle said he wanted to reassure parents and citizens of Kanawha County that the county's schools will be open today. Classes will be dismissed after the morning session for a scheduled teacher in-service training, he said.

Kittle said the board made a decision that would provide teachers an opportunity to do what they wished to do at noon by the rescheduling. He is requiring all teachers who are absent today to fill out a form giving the reason for their absence.

Marian Alston, president of the Kanawha County Association of Classroom Teachers, said, in the beginning, Kanawha County teachers voted for full participation and to sacrifice the day, but individuals would have to decide if they will attend the morning session of classes.

A group of about 150 Kanawha County teachers gathered for a rally Thursday and made plans to meet at 10 a.m. today at the Capitol to distribute materials.

The Kanawha County Board of Education warned teachers Wednesday night that any teachers participating in the protest today by staying off their jobs will be disciplined.

"As required by statute, the Kanawha County Board of Education will discipline employees who strike in violation of state law and their contracts," said Alice Moore, board president.

Ms. Alston said Kanawha County teachers have never been encouraged to try illegal acts. "Obviously, Mrs. Moore has been misinformed about our efforts," Ms. Alston said. "We have always intended to protest the actions of the Legislature, not advocate illegal actions against the board of education. All along we have asked teachers to sacrifice a day's pay, not to attempt an illegal act."