

## News Debate: Cash Courses



### ***Should schools pay students to come to class?***

Friday is payday for students at one charter high school in Cincinnati. Dohn Community High School recently began rewarding students who had perfect attendance and good behavior with cold, hard cash. At the end of each week, seniors who have shown up on time all five days and stayed out of trouble receive a debit card worth \$25, while younger students who have done the same receive \$10. The school also rewards those students by depositing \$5 per week into individual savings accounts.

People who support the program and others like it say it delivers results. The monetary rewards motivate many kids, especially those from underprivileged families, to come to class when they would otherwise stay home. Those who oppose such programs argue that paying kids sends the wrong message. They say students should come to class because they want to learn, not because they want to earn a buck.

*Current Events* student reporters Joseph Maneen and Peter Brosnan each cashed in a side.

### **Big Bucks**

I believe granting money to high school students for attendance is a good idea. Teens can use that money to help themselves later on in life, whether for college, an apartment, or a rainy day. Because

the funding comes from kindhearted people from the community, donations from private companies, and federal grants, the programs will not strain school budgets.

Studies have shown that rewards can motivate students to attend school and that the more kids are in school, the more they learn. Chloe Hughes, a 15-year-old high school student from Bradford, Mass., agrees. "The money at the end of the week inspires students to try hard in school and get better grades," she says. "By making money at school, it eliminates the factor of getting a separate job, so they can focus on their studies." Receiving the money will make many teens want to come to school, rather than be on the street getting into trouble.

Finally, who wouldn't want free money? Think about it: If someone were feeding you \$30 a week just to toe the line, that would be pretty great. That money could help you with anything, from saving up for something you really want to paying off a debt.

## Intangible Rewards

Think about what motivates you to go to school every day. Your list might include learning new information or spending time with your friends. Should getting paid be included on that list? Of course not!

Learning to be self-motivated is an important life skill. "Students should want to come to school and have a desire to learn, not to make money," Leigh Kouril, an eighth grader from Mildred E. Strang Middle School in Yorktown Heights, N.Y., explains. "Students should realize that doing well in school now could help them to earn a good living in the future."

In addition, students might be less likely to pay attention in class if they think they are being paid just to attend. That type of reward system could become a slippery slope as students focus on earning money instead of learning.

Finally, paying students to attend class sends the wrong message. If that motivation gets hardwired into student mind-sets, students may think that basic tasks deserve tangible rewards. Intangible rewards, such as gaining self-confidence, are worth much more than money. Anna Kouril, another eighth grader from Yorktown Heights, says, "What students put into their education is what they will get out of it."

# donation

do · na · tion

## Advanced Definition

### noun

1. the act or an instance of giving or contributing, as to a cause.

*Each donation was scrupulously recorded.*

*His donation of the money to a charity surprised his family.*

2. the gift or contribution thus made.

*Even a small donation is greatly appreciated.*

*Your donations will help many children get the medical attention they need.*

## Spanish cognate

*donación*: The Spanish word *donación* means donation.

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## These are some examples of how the word or forms of the word are used:

1. In the other 76 percent of cases, the stem cells are extracted from the donor's blood. That's the type of **donation** that Hoffman made.
2. They scarfed down the cookies and they stuffed the **donation** box, and when Jesse strummed the chords to Anna's favorite songs, they all sang along.
3. Before the procedure, Hoffman underwent a physical exam to make sure he was completely healthy. Five days prior to **donation** day, he was given a drug to stimulate the formation of blood cells.
4. On **donation** day Hoffman received a final shot of the medication. Then a needle was inserted into his arm, and his blood was slowly removed and circulated through a machine that filtered out the stem cells.

# monetary

mon · e · tar · y

## Advanced Definition

### adjective

1. relating to currency or money.
2. relating to the currency or money supply of a country.

## Spanish cognate

*monetario*: The Spanish word *monetario* means monetary.

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## These are some examples of how the word or forms of the word are used:

1. The **monetary** rewards motivate many kids, especially those from underprivileged families, to come to class when they would otherwise stay home.
2. Not only do the competitors experience some fame, but often they are also awarded free items or **monetary** prizes of up to \$10,000 or more!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. How often does Dohn Community High School reward students with money?

- A. every day
- B. once a week
- C. twice a week
- D. once a month

2. The passage shows two sides of this debate: Should schools pay students to go to class? According to the passage, what is one argument in favor of students being paid to attend class?

- A. Students will become less likely to pay attention in class.
- B. The program will teach teens that school is about money.
- C. Getting paid will teach students to become self-motivated.
- D. It will eliminate the need for teens to get a separate job.

3. What can you most likely conclude about eighth grader Leigh Kouril after reading the passage?

- A. He does not make money for attending his middle school.
- B. When he graduates, he wants to go to Dohn Community High.
- C. His parents pay him for school attendance and good behavior.
- D. He is jealous of students at Dohn Community High School.

4. Read this sentence from the passage:

"If that motivation gets hardwired into student mind-sets, students may think that basic tasks deserve tangible rewards."

In this sentence, the word **tangible** means

- A. money
- B. touchable
- C. tempting
- D. enormous

**5.** What was the author's purpose for including the opening paragraph ("Friday is payday...") in the passage?

- A. to explain why Dohn Community High School should be a model for all other schools
- B. to give an example of a high school that pays students for perfect attendance
- C. to explain the reason why students at Dohn Community High School get better grades
- D. to persuade other schools to follow the example of Dohn Community High School

**6.** Along with rewarding students debit cards for perfect attendance and good behavior, what do students at Dohn Community High School receive?

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**7.** One student reporter wrote this sentence: "If someone were feeding you \$30 a week just to toe the line, that would be pretty great." What does he mean by that? How do you know?

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8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word that best completes the sentence.

The program at Dohn Community High School will not affect the school budget \_\_\_\_\_ the funding comes from donations and federal grants.

- A. although
- B. before
- C. because
- D. however

9. **Vocabulary Word:** intangible: something that can't be touched.

Use the vocabulary word in a sentence:

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