



**ASK DEANNA!**  
*Real People,  
Real Advice*

Ask Deanna! Is an advice column known for its fearless approach to reality-based subjects!

Dear Deanna!

I've started a new job and my boyfriend won't stop calling me all the time. I've explained to him that my new boss is strict and all the calls are monitored. I need this job and am not willing to lose it over him. I've been written up twice, we are now arguing at home, and he calls me more at work, and it's becoming stressful. I thought this was the man for me, but now that I see he will jeopardize my job and livelihood, I'm not sure. Is there any thing I can do in this situation?

Angel  
Boston, MA

Dear Angel:

If we do some math, I would certainly say that only one person in this relationship has a job — and that's you. There's no other reason your boyfriend can call you all day at work unless he doesn't have a job or a life. He's making a strong statement of disrespect because any man that will put your job at risk is a man that only cares about himself. You have a choice in this matter. Lose the man or the job. And unless you want to go hungry, the decision is easy.

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Deanna!

My ex-girlfriend seems to wear a sign on her forehead that says all of her ex-boyfriends need to be in her face. I was cool with this at first because I'm a secure man. Now she's taking things too far and wants to socialize with these men behind my back. Things were fine until she started keeping secrets from me. I'm convinced that if things were on the up-and-up she wouldn't have secrets. But she won't see it my way, nor stop this behavior. Am I right or wrong?

Justin  
Online Reader

Dear Justin:

You were foolish to begin this relationship with the ex-lovers in the picture. Your girlfriend isn't taking your relationship seriously and she's going to do what she wants and with whomever. Regardless of what you say, she's going to do her thing, so you should stop trying. If she's keeping secrets about other men, she'll lie and have secrets about everything else. You should save yourself the stress and call it quits and keep it moving.

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Deanna!

A few months ago, I loaned a friend some money. It wasn't a lot, and I was prepared to count it as a loss if I wasn't repaid. The problem began when she borrowed more money and promised to pay it back by a certain date. I loaned her money a third time and she signed a promissory note. Now the money is significant and she's moved, stopped taking my calls and has a new car. Do I have any options to recover my money, or do I just move on?

Katina  
Dallas, TX

Dear Katina:

You should bang your head against the wall a few times for being so stupid. You helped put wings on your money when you gave her more loans. If this is your friend, you could see she was broke to begin with and more so when she started asking you for money. You played yourself on this one, and your friend knew she could get away with it. Depending upon the amount, you may be able to go to small claims court with the signed document, but don't hold your breath.

Write: Ask Deanna! Email: askdeanna1@yahoo.com or 264 S. LaCienega Blvd. Suite 1283 Beverly Hills, CA 90211 Website: www.askdeanna.com.

# Educators weigh merit pay

WASHINGTON (AP) - While the words "merit pay" drew hisses and boos at a recent teachers' union convention, educators are endorsing contracts that pay bonuses for boosting students' test scores.

The National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers oppose linking a teacher's paycheck to how well their students do on tests. But that is not stopping Rob Weil, the AFT's deputy director of educational issues, from helping local unions hammer out contracts that include new merit-pay plans.

"We don't have a message on a board that says, 'Hey, thinking about this?'" he said. But he said the AFT feels obliged to assist chapters that have decided to go this route.

Teachers usually are paid according to a century-old career ladder that rewards seniority and levels of education. The system was designed to ensure fair compensation for women and minorities. The average starting salary today is about \$31,000.

"They don't make enough money, especially the good ones — especially the great ones," said Louis Malfaro, the teachers' union president in Austin, Texas, where nine schools are part of a pilot program to overhaul how teach-

ers are paid.

Malfaro said Austin's approach is modeled partly on Denver's, which links salaries to students' test scores and other measures. Malfaro says the Austin effort will expand slowly and be evaluated methodically to avoid the kinds of mistakes made elsewhere.

"Our approach has been a slow, deliberate and steady one," Malfaro said. "This is a highway with wrecked cars

**"Our approach has been a slow, deliberate and steady one. This is a highway with wrecked cars all over it."**

—Louis Malfaro, the teachers' union president, Austin, Texas

all over it."

Florida recently had to retool a merit-pay plan after a large number of districts opted out, citing teacher concerns.

A plan in Houston came under criticism because it was put in place over teachers' objections.

Vanderbilt University education professor Jim Guthrie said the involvement of teachers is essential.

"I just put myself in their shoes. All of a sudden you are going to change all the rules and you're not going to talk to me?" said Guthrie, who is assisting districts that got federal grants to implement merit pay.

Weil, the AFT official,

said teacher compensation has to be bargained locally. He also said the new plans should make good professional development available to increase the chances that teachers will raise students' achievement.

Union opposition to merit pay stems partly from failed efforts of the 1980s. In those cases, principals generally were given the power to decide who would get the additional dollars.

"They often had no basis of any objective measure of performance," said Susan Moore Johnson, a professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

"So what sometimes happened is there would be different awards made to different individuals and they would become public, and people would be appalled at the individuals who were given the awards or not given the awards."

The 2002 No Child Left Behind law has placed a greater emphasis on using objective data in schools.

The law requires annual math and reading tests. The scores of students in certain grades are compared year to

year. Lawmakers want to change the law, which is up for renewal, to encourage schools to measure individual student progress over time instead of using snapshot comparisons of certain grade levels.

Once schools track that, they could look at which teachers consistently are moving students along, say children's advocates. Some places, including Tennessee, already are doing this.

But teachers say many factors affect test scores, including some that are beyond their control; for example, family income and level of parental involvement.

While individual student scores already are tied to teachers' pay in Denver and elsewhere, Austin's program relies on test scores to reward all teachers for school-wide gains.

Johnson, the Harvard professor, said that is fair.

"It's becoming clear. To do math well, you have to read well. So if students do well in math, do you give that math teacher the bonus? Or do you give that bonus to the reading teacher two years before?"

Malfaro said Austin's approach will encourage teachers to collaborate instead of competing.

To encourage that further, some teachers will serve as mentors.

## Vick

(Continued from Page 1) in Newport News.

"I will redeem myself. I have to," he vowed.

In Atlanta, the Falcons said they would not cut Vick immediately because of salary-cap issues. The team intends to pursue the \$22 million in bonus money that he already received in a \$130 million contract signed in 2004.

"We cannot tell you today that Michael is cut from the team," Blank said. "Cutting him today may feel better emotionally for us and many of our fans. But it's not in the long-term best interests of our franchise."

Vick, who took no questions after his first public statement about the dogfighting ring, said little in court. With family members, including his brother and mother, watching from the front row of the packed courtroom, Vick stood flanked by two of his five lawyers and softly answered "Yes, sir"

and "No, sir" to Hudson's questions. The plea was accepted by Hudson, who asked: "Are you entering the plea of guilty to a conspiracy charge because you are in fact guilty?"

Vick answered yes, and Hudson emphasized his broad latitude in sentencing.

"You're taking your chances here. You'll have to live with whatever decision I make," he said.

U.S. Attorney Chuck Rosenberg said a first-time offender ordinarily might receive no jail time for the dogfighting conspiracy.

"We thought, however, that the conduct in this conspiracy was heinous, cruel and inhumane," he said.

Blank and general manager Rich McKay refused to say whether Vick would ever play for the Falcons again, though their reluctance to cut ties with the quarterback is related more to complicated legal issues than any willingness to take him back.

They've already sent a "demand letter" to Vick saying they will attempt to recoup the bonus money he was paid.

"We realize that this situation has tarnished our fran-

chise," Blank said. "We've heard from fans who are embarrassed to wear the No. 7 jersey now. We cannot undo what's been done. But we can and we will recover from this."



Rev. Dr. Charles Hemphill  
Senior Pastor and Founder

**A Personal Invitation To  
"Come Grow With Us!"**

**GETHSEMANE  
BAPTIST CHURCH**

**"Morning Glory!"**

A Service of Prayer, Praise, and Preaching

Will be held at our new location.  
**Southwestern Theological  
Seminary Chapel  
4085 N. Rancho Drive  
(and Jones), Suite 110**

Starting Sunday, September 2 at 8:00 am.

**"A Church Driven To Live Altered Lives!"**

Mark 14:36; Romans 12:1-2

