# What is it Worth to Be in Class?

Directions: Calculate how much getting that high school diploma is worth.

*Given the average yearly earnings for[[1]](#footnote-1)*

Doctoral Degree $3,916,640

Professional Degree $3,870,880

Master’s Degree $3,113,760

College graduate with bachelor’s degree $2,595,840

Two-year college associate’s degree $1,844,960

Some college, but no degree $1,732,640

High school diploma (or GED) $1,551,680

Less than high school $1,231,360

1. Figure the difference in potential income between a high school graduate and someone who did not go to school beyond the ninth grade:

$1,551,680 Average lifetime earnings (high school diploma)

– $1,231,360 Average lifetime earnings (ninth-grade education or less)

= $      Potential additional future earnings for a high school graduate

1. Divide the potential additional future earnings for a high school graduate (from 1 above) by the number of years typically spent in high school (4):

$      Potential additional future earnings for each year of high school

1. Divide the potential additional future earnings per school year (from 2 above) by the average number of school days per school year (180):

### = $      Approximate value of one day’s education for a high school graduate

1. <https://www.bls.gov/careeroutlook/2020/data-on-display/education-pays.htm>; based on 40-year, full-time employment [↑](#footnote-ref-1)