

What is it worth to stay in class?

Directions: Calculate how much getting that high school diploma is worth based on the following information.

Key Terms:

Lifetime earnings are accumulated over 50 years from age 20 to 69.

Educational attainment is an individual's highest level of education.

Average lifetime earnings based on educational attainment:

Professional Degree	\$4,159,000
Doctoral Degree	\$3,525,000
Master’s Degree	\$2,834,000
College graduate with bachelor’s degree	\$2,422,000
Two-year college associate’s degree	\$1,813,000
High school diploma (or GED)	\$1,371,000
Less than high school	\$ 936,000

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

$\$1,371,000 - \$936,000 = \$$

(A) Potential additional future earnings for a high school graduate = \$

2. Divide the difference by potential additional future earnings for a high school graduate by the number of years typically spent in high school (4): \$

(A) _____ \div 4 years = \$

(B) Potential additional future earnings associated with each year of high school = \$

3. Divide the potential additional future earnings per school year by the average number of school days per school year:

(B) _____ \div 180 days per school year = \$

(C) Approximate value of a day’s education for a high school graduate =

\$ _____

Note: While the average is shown for all workers, the wage gap still exists between men and women and the disparity is even higher between men and women of color. Checkout the [Institute for Women’s Policy Research](https://iwpr.org/research/) to find out more info. <https://iwpr.org/research/>