

# What are the key trends for independent schools in 2018?

By [Lala Steyn](#)

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Each year 11,848,000 pupils enroll in schools in South Africa, according to the [World Bank](#). In January, parent's hearts ache as they view pictures of children attending their first day at school. What lies ahead for these youngsters? Will they discover the delight of African literature and the mysteries of the universe? Will they attain their personal best? Or will they become bored and frustrated and drop out of school?



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1. Parents will continue to seek schools for their children that provide quality education. They are increasingly choosing independent/private schools because of the challenges facing the public-school sector.
2. There is rising demand for holistic learning that is a combination of academic instruction, sport, culture and technology. On top, schools are under pressure to demonstrate that quality is being delivered, such as through independent annual systemic testing of literacy and numeracy. We encourage all schools and the private sector to set up such systems.
3. As the economy pinches, parents' ability to afford the more expensive private school fees will be increasingly tested. As a result, demand for affordable independent schools will be boosted. We see one of the challenges is to keep independent schooling at affordable levels for most working families. To date innovations in alternative ways of delivering the curriculum (e.g. blended learning or project-based teaching) or alternative building design and construction have not delivered significant reduction in costs.

4. Parents have zero-tolerance for racism, and programmes that honestly and openly tackle the issues of social cohesion will become increasingly important.
5. As the competition amongst private school operators increases, the demand for quality teachers rises. The demand for affordable and practical teacher training qualifications will increase.
6. The private school market has seen increased competition, especially in Gauteng. Many new school operators have entered the market while the two JSE-listed companies continue to grow. 2018 will see some operators fall behind, and the opportunity for consolidation by others.

## ABOUT LALA STEYN

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