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REVEALED: How much parents will pay to educate their child in Malaysia

Typical family prepared to invest RM 1.0–1.3 million (≈ $210,000–$275,000 USD) in children's education at top Malaysian schools.

Nik Higgins, the CEO of EdTech company, doris

KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA, April 2, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- PARENTS in Malaysia are typically willing to spend up to RM 1.3 million - around $275,000 USD - on independent school education over the course of their child's journey from early years to college graduation, new figures show.

New data released by school discovery platform, doris, reveals the financial extent to which families are investing in their children's futures, with fee commitments rising steadily as pupils move through the system.

The statistics - drawn from more than two million data points - provide the most comprehensive picture ever of spending intent across the country's 170-plus independent-school sector, underlining its growing economic significance and the value families place on high quality international education.

> For the first time, we're able to quantify how families behave when they're on the school discovery journey, from initial research to the point they actively shortlist or choose a school."
>
> *Nik Higgins*

Nik Higgins, CEO of doris, said: "For the first time, we're able to quantify - with real precision - how families behave when they're on the school discovery journey, from initial research to the point they actively shortlist or choose a school.

"doris sits on millions of genuine, first party data points, which gives us a globally unique view of what parents value, what they worry about, and how those priorities shift as their children grow.

“We have observed that a consistent picture emerges: families are planning long term, weighing value carefully, and treating school choice as one of the most consequential investments they’ll ever make.

“Very few organisations in this sector get to understand what sits behind family intent, but the data we have accumulated allows us to understand sentiment and behaviour in a way that hasn’t been possible before.”

Based on median annual fees using doris’ latest dataset, early-years families in Malaysia are typically prepared spend RM 31,000 ($7,000 USD) per year, rising to RM 28,000–30,000 ($6,500–$7,000 USD) through the middle-school years.

By senior school, median annual fees reach RM 55,000 ($12,000 USD), reflecting a marketplace where value, fit and academic confidence remain top priorities for internationally minded parents.

Jason Hoppner, Chief Advisor at doris, said: “It is easy to reduce this conversation to headline numbers, but behind every fee figure is a family trying to make the right call for their child. The search process is often stressful, time-pressured and emotionally charged, particularly for internationally mobile families who may be choosing a school from a distance or navigating a new education system.

“What the doris data highlights is how seriously parents take that responsibility. They are looking for the right fit, yes, but they are also trying to reduce risk. They want to know that the academic offer is credible, that the pastoral environment is strong, and that the experience will justify the investment they are making over many years.

“Better information lowers the stress in that process. When parents can compare options clearly and understand why a school matches their needs, they can move forward with confidence. That is good for families, and it is also good for schools that are genuinely aligned with what those families are looking for.”

doris is designed to bring greater clarity to one of the most complex decisions families make. Rather than relying on brochures, directories or marketing claims, the platform helps parents understand which schools align with their needs, preferences and budgets.

For schools, doris unlocks access to deeply meaningful datasets for the first time. Through their personal dashboards, admissions teams can understand parent search behaviour, sentiment, competitive positioning and much more.

The platform was launched in Singapore in 2025, before being rolled out to Malaysia, Thailand, Hong Kong, China and Japan.

More recently, Nik announced its global expansion, with an aim to have upwards of 10,000 international schools and kindergartens on the platform by April.

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