

Changing education one mountain at a time

Issued by [Joe Public](#)

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Bronwyn James, MD of One School at a Time, challenged her body and mind to trek up to Everest's base camp in April this year to raise funds for the schools advancement programme. One School at a Time is a registered non-profit organisation, established by Joe Public in 2008. The programme aims to create a scalable and sustainable system that will support the improvement of high schools in Johannesburg so that they not only become exceptional, but shining examples to the rest of the world.



James returned on 4 May after an 11-day trek and a 5,545m ascent, somewhat exhausted, mentally fatigued, but more importantly, inspired. "It has to be the most physically strenuous task I have ever completed, but the most rewarding. The sense of accomplishment and success far outweighs the sore feet and tired muscles, not to mention the beauty of your surroundings everyday. You only needed to look up to see the bigger picture," said James.

But, as high as she was, her head was not altogether in the clouds. James managed to visit Nandi Secondary School, an extremely disadvantaged school in Kathmandu, where she donated \$1,000 to the school on behalf of One

School at a Time. "Kathmandu also experiences severe overcrowding in their classrooms, lack equipment and teaching materials, but their biggest challenge is to provide clean drinking water for students and toilet facilities. Yet despite these challenges, they rise above their circumstances and with dedicated, committed principals and teachers, still manage a 100% pass rate with many students continuing to tertiary education."

One School at a Time supports Forte High School in Dobsonville, Soweto, and Itirele-Zenzele Comprehensive School in Diepsloot, who are shining examples of such a pertinent partnership.

From upgrading the schools' ablution facilities, tennis and basketball courts and libraries to hosting motivational talks, study camps and weekly interaction, this five-year partnership has reflected in the schools' pass rates. Forte High has seen a 52% to 92% improvement in the past five years with Itirele-Zenzele seeing a 74% to 81% improvement in the last year alone.

"Education is at the heart of growth for our country and as a business, we will remain committed to this cause for as long as we are in business," said Pepe Marais, founder of One School at a Time and CCO of Joe Public.

To get involved, find out more or make a donation visit <http://www.oneschoolatime.co.za>.

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