

Division of Schools – Budget Summary

Overview of the Division

The Division of Schools provides the essential services necessary to deliver the Howard County Public School System's educational mission. The role of the division is to directly coordinate the supervision, leadership development, and evaluation of school-based administrators, coordinating information needed to be responsive to the community, and ensuring that quality instruction is occurring and being monitored in schools.

The Division of Schools is organized into two departments:

- Schools
- Student Well-Being

The services of this division are delivered through the budgets of the following programs:

- Chief of Schools
- Elementary School Instruction
- Middle School Instruction
- High School Instruction
- Program Support for Schools
- Homewood
- Division of Schools
- Athletics and Activities
- Security and Emergency Preparedness

The Division of Schools staff promotes equity by ensuring that each student receives a high-quality education through access to individualized instruction, challenges, supports, and opportunities by observing and evaluating school-based administrators and ensuring that quality instruction is occurring and being monitored in schools while maintaining safe and secure facilities for students, staff, and community. Staff collaborate with schools to ensure that every student achieves academic success while enjoying a sense of belonging. Services are provided to support students' health, social-emotional growth and well-being, academic and behavioral success, and career and academic goal setting.

Summary of Major Budget Changes for FY 2027

The budget for the Division of Schools is increasing by a net change of \$41.1 million or 9.98 percent and increasing by 212.0 FTE positions compared to the current budget. This total change is the composite of budget additions for existing service commitments, employee compensation and benefits, priorities, one-time requests, base reductions, and realignments. The specific amounts for each major budget grouping are:

- Existing Service Commitments – \$(8.5) million and reduction of (44.0) FTE positions
- Employee Compensation and Benefits – \$28.4 million
- Priorities – \$2.4 million and net increase of 15.0 FTE positions
- One-Time Requests – \$(200,000)
- Base Budget Reductions – \$(313,709) and reduction of (5.0) FTE positions
- Realignments – \$19.3 million and net increase of 246.0 FTE positions

These budget groups are used to explain why the budget is changing by organizing adjustments into major categories and subcategories. Definitions of each major group, along with associated subgroups, are provided below. Note, some divisions will not have budget changes in every major group or subgroup.

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Existing Service Commitments reflect budget changes necessary to continue the provision of current services. These changes include, but are not limited to:

- Blueprint for Maryland's Future
 - Collaborative Time Per Pupil
 - Multilingual Learners
 - Prekindergarten Expansion
- Staffing changes based on enrollment fluctuations
- Special education service levels, contract costs, compliance requirements, and non-public placements
- Student transportation
- Financial and contractual obligations
- Position reclassifications
- Utilities
- Year-over-year personnel cost changes
- Other cost changes required to maintain existing services

Employee Compensation and Benefits include budget changes that support employee pay and benefit obligations and projected cost increases, such as:

- Employee compensation placeholders for negotiated labor contracts and contracts under negotiation
- Costs associated with previously negotiated pay and benefits
- Employee health insurance changes based on actuarial projections and centrally determined rates
- Blueprint-related National Board Certification and maintenance pay
- Other employee benefit cost adjustments

Priorities represent budget changes that support existing policies, Superintendent or Board-defined goals, and Strategic Plan priorities, including:

- Strengthen Learning & Instruction
- Cultivate Student Belonging & Well-Being
- Foster Staff Growth & Engagement
- Enhance Systemic Planning & Procedures
- Partner with Families & Community

One-Time Funding Items consist of non-recurring budget costs that have been specifically approved by the Maryland State Department of Education as one-time expenditures.

Base Budget Reductions are reductions to existing services funded in the base budget (FY 2026 Approved Budget) that are implemented to align expenditure growth with available revenue. These reductions are categorized as:

- School-Based Reductions, which directly affect school instruction and operations; and
- Non-School-Based Reductions, which impact Central Office services and systemwide costs that support students, staff, and school operations.

Realignments represent transfers of funds between programs, state categories, and/or expenditure categories to support existing requirements. While realignments are budget neutral overall, they may result in significant changes among programs and accounts. The FY 2027 budget includes realignments for two primary purposes:

- Adjustments related to the reorganization of divisions and programs; and

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- Redistribution of existing budget authority to address budgetary needs and ensure expenditures are properly classified by state category, division, program, and/or account.

This Division Summary section provides a narrative explanation of budget changes, accompanied by supporting schedules that present changes in budgeted dollars and full-time equivalent (FTE) positions relative to the current budget. A consolidated summary of budget changes for all divisions and by state category is provided in the **Factors Influencing and Summary of the Budget** section of the Executive Summary in the budget book.

A summary of budget changes for this division is provided below.

Existing Service Commitments

- \$102,000 – Contractual increases for bus transportation for Athletics and Activities (8601) program based on historical trends.
- \$(2.3) million and (24.0) FTE – Enrollment Changes.
 - \$(1.2) million and (14.0) FTE Teacher positions for Elementary School Instruction (3010) program based on projected enrollment and staffing ratios.
 - \$(300,293) and (2.7) FTE Teacher positions for Middle School Instruction (3020) program based on projected enrollment and staffing ratios.
 - \$(811,906) and (7.3) FTE Teacher positions for High School Instruction (3030) program based on projected enrollment and staffing ratios.
- \$75,000 – Repair and/or replacement of ice machines, washers, and dryers for Athletics and Activities (8601) programs.
- \$11,744 – Reclassification request of Staffing Analyst to Coordinator in Chief of Schools (0305) program.
- \$(2.2) million and (20.0) FTE Teacher positions for Elementary School Instruction (3010) program based on projected enrollment and staffing ratios. These positions being reduced are part of the special education enrollment services level position request for FY 2027.
- \$(4.2) million – Year-over-Year Personnel Cost Change. This adjustment will appear in all program budgets that have budgeted personnel. A complete explanation for these changes is included in the Factors Influencing and Summary of the Budget in the Executive Summary section of the budget book.

Employee Compensation and Benefits

- \$14.7 million– Placeholder for employee compensation increases subject to collective bargaining.
- \$11.8 million – Health Insurance cost increases based on preliminary actuarial estimates.
- \$1.6 million – National Board Certification (NBC) teacher pay.
- \$307,694– employee compensation increases related to current ratified agreement for Athletics and Activities (8601) stipends and HCASA longevity pay stipends budgeted in Division of Schools (4701) program.

Priorities

- \$1.4 million and 13.0 FTE – To *Cultivate Student Belonging and Well-Being*
 - \$1.8 million and 13.0 FTE Athletic Trainer positions for salaries, benefits, and computers for full time athletic trainers in the Athletics and Activities (8601)
 - \$(556,900) elimination of contracted athletic trainers for Athletics and Activities (8601) program related to request for full-time Athletic Trainers.

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- \$150,000 for supplies, equipment and contracted officials associated with high school girls flag football added to Athletics and Activities (8601) program
- \$16,000 – Increase in Commencement related expenses for graduation ceremonies at Merriweather Post Pavillion.
- \$743,522 and 6.0 FTE – To *School Safety and Security*
 - \$500,501 and 6.0 FTE School Culture and Safety Assistant positions for salaries, benefits, computers, uniforms, and supplies for new positions in Security and Emergency Preparedness (7404) program.
 - \$3,000 for increased costs of mileage reimbursement for security staff travelling between schools in the Security and Emergency Preparedness (7404) program.
 - \$78,394 for increased costs to replace radios, batteries, and general supplies for security staff in the Security and Emergency Preparedness (7404) program
 - \$60,436 for costs associated with visitor management equipment in Security and Emergency Preparedness (7404) program
 - \$101,191 for increased overtime costs for security staff in the Security and Emergency Preparedness (7404) program
- \$225,971 and (4.0) FTE – To *Strengthen Learning and Instruction*
 - \$118,451 for increase in the General Education Paraeducator allowance from \$.30 per hour to \$.75 per hour.
 - \$107,520 and (4.0) FTE providing a division-wide budget neutral adjustment converting 17.0 FTE positions to 13.0 Assistant Principal positions to *Strengthen Learning and Instruction*:
 - \$2.4 million and 13.0 FTE Assistant Principal positions to provide additional administrators in elementary and middle schools for Division of Schools (4701).
 - \$(1.4) million and (13.0) FTE Teacher (Pool) positions eliminated from Program Support for Schools (3201) to support Assistant Principal request.
 - \$(450,960) and (4.0) FTE Leadership Intern positions eliminated from Division of Schools (4701) to support Assistant Principal request.
 - \$(317,280) reduction in various wages in Program Support for Schools (3201) and Division of Schools (4701) to support Assistant Principal request.
 - \$(38,708) reduction in workshop wages, supplies, and contracted services in Homewood (3402) program to support Assistant Principal request.
 - \$(78,088) elimination of transportation requirements in Division of Schools (4701) to support Assistant Principal request.

One-Time Requests

- \$(200,000) – Reduction of FY 2026 approved one-time funding for repair and/or replacement of ice machines in High School Athletics and Activities (8601) program.

Base Budget Reductions

- \$(313,709) and (5.0) FTE – School-based budget cut in Middle School Instruction (3020), eliminating (5.0) General Education Paraeducators to reallocate funds for system priorities and to align total general fund expenditure growth with available revenue.

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Realignments

- \$19.3 million and 246.0 FTE – Realignment of functions and funds among programs.
 - \$23.2 million and 280.0 FTE – Relocating the Kindergarten grade staffing budget from the Academics Division to Division of Schools. Transfer of 192.0 Teachers and 88.0 Paraeducators from Early Childhood Curricular Programs (1301) to Elementary School Instruction (3010) to realign staffing between divisions.
 - \$(2.8) million and (24.0) FTE – Transfer of Bridges program activities in Homewood (3402) to Academics – Department of Special Education (3323) to realign program activities between divisions.
 - \$(422,780) and (5.0) FTE – Transfer of Special Education Teacher (pool) positions from Program Support for Schools (3201) to Special Education – School Based Services (3321) to realign staffing between divisions.
 - \$(346,502) and (3.0) FTE – Transfers School Counselor positions from Homewood (3402) to School Counseling and Student Records (5601) to realign staffing between programs.
 - \$(267,977) and (2.0) FTE –Transfers Social Worker Positions from Homewood (3402) to School Social Work Services (6103) to realign staffing between programs.
 - \$(50,060) – various realignments among programs including (\$16,148) from Security (7404) to Communications and Engagement (0302) for front desk administrative duty coverage and (\$33,912) to Student, Family, and Community Partnership (0106) for Student Member of Board (SMOB) activities.
 - Consolidates the following programs to more efficiently and effectively manage program activities and program budgets:
 - Emergency Preparedness and Response (7403) combined with Security and Emergency Preparedness (7404)
 - Intramurals (8701) and Co-Curricular Activities (8801) combined with Athletics and Activities (8601)

Summary schedules of these changes are presented in the following pages.

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| SUMMARY OF FY 2027 SUPERINTENDENT'S PROPOSED BUDGET | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Program | Program Number | Approved Budget FY 2026 | Budget Additions and Base Reductions | Total Realignments | Net Budget Changes | Net Budget Changes FTE | Superintendent Proposed FY 2027 | \$ Change From FY 2026 | % Change from FY 2026 | |
| Chief of Schools | 0305 | 2,710,812 | 115,898 | - | 115,898 | - | \$ 2,826,710 | \$ 115,898 | 4.28% | |
| Elementary School Instruction | 3010 | 115,338,854 | 9,104,399 | 23,185,884 | 32,290,283 | 246.00 | 147,629,137 | 32,290,283 | 28.00% | |
| Middle School Instruction | 3020 | 86,263,038 | 2,457,921 | - | 2,457,921 | (7.70) | 88,720,959 | 2,457,921 | 2.85% | |
| High School Instruction | 3030 | 115,396,027 | 4,167,375 | - | 4,167,375 | (7.30) | 119,563,402 | 4,167,375 | 3.61% | |
| Program Support for Schools | 3201 | 7,323,813 | (1,222,829) | (262,446) | (1,485,275) | (18.00) | 5,838,538 | (1,485,275) | -20.28% | |
| Homewood | 3402 | 8,129,053 | 163,565 | (3,418,729) | (3,255,164) | (29.00) | 4,873,889 | (3,255,164) | -40.04% | |
| Division of Schools | 4701 | 64,462,870 | 4,692,206 | (194,246) | 4,497,960 | 9.00 | 68,960,830 | 4,497,960 | 6.98% | |
| Emergency Preparedness and Response | 7403 | 424,966 | (163,216) | (261,750) | (424,966) | (1.00) | - | (424,966) | -100.00% | |
| Security and Emergency Preparedness | 7404 | 3,393,279 | 902,081 | 245,602 | 1,147,683 | 7.00 | 4,540,962 | 1,147,683 | 33.82% | |
| Athletics and Activities | 8601 | 7,600,237 | 1,560,341 | 340,708 | 1,901,049 | 13.00 | 9,501,286 | 1,901,049 | 25.01% | |
| Intramurals | 8701 | 93,995 | - | (93,995) | (93,995) | - | - | (93,995) | -100.00% | |
| Co-curricular Activities | 8801 | 246,713 | - | (246,713) | (246,713) | - | - | (246,713) | -100.00% | |
| Schools Total | | \$ 411,383,657 | \$ 21,777,741 | \$ 19,294,315 | \$ 41,072,056 | 212.00 | \$ 452,455,713 | \$ 41,072,056 | 9.98% | |

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| SUMMARY OF FY 2027 BUDGET CHANGES BY PROGRAM AND SUMMARY GROUPINGS | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----|------------------|----|-------------------------------|---------|---------------------------|---------|-------------------------|--------|-----------------------------|
| General Fund | | 0305 | | 3010 | | 3020 | | 3030 | | 3201 |
| PROGRAMS | | Chief of Schools | | Elementary School Instruction | | Middle School Instruction | | High School Instruction | | Program Support for Schools |
| | | FTE | | FTE | | FTE | | FTE | | FTE |
| EXISTING SERVICE COMMITMENTS | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bus Contracts-Obligated Increase | \$ | - | \$ | - | \$ | - | \$ | - | \$ | - |
| Enrollment Changes | | - | | (1,169,254) | (14.00) | (300,293) | (2.70) | (811,906) | (7.30) | - |
| Existing Services-Other | | - | | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Reclassifications-Requested | | 11,744 | | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Special Education-Enrollment Service Levels | | - | | (2,224,400) | (20.00) | - | - | - | - | - |
| Year over Year Personnel Cost Change | | 9,555 | | (864,489) | - | (1,703,678) | - | (1,306,591) | - | 186,345 |
| Subtotal Existing Service Commitments | | 21,299 | - | (4,258,143) | (34.00) | (2,003,971) | (2.70) | (2,118,497) | (7.30) | 186,345 |
| EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS | | | | | | | | | | |
| Blueprint-National Board Certification | \$ | - | \$ | 519,337 | - | \$ | 452,086 | - | \$ | 34,989 |
| Employee Compensation-Placeholder | | 68,729 | | 4,995,205 | - | 3,007,055 | - | 3,917,896 | - | 197,936 |
| Employee Compensation-Ratified Agreement | | - | | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Health Insurance | | 25,870 | | 7,729,549 | - | 1,316,460 | - | 1,785,279 | - | 34,241 |
| Subtotal Employee Compensation and Benefits | | 94,599 | - | 13,244,091 | - | 4,775,601 | - | 6,285,872 | - | 267,166 |
| PRIORITIES | | | | | | | | | | |
| Cultivate Student Belonging & Well-Being | \$ | - | \$ | - | \$ | - | \$ | - | \$ | - |
| Priorities-Other | | - | | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| School Safety and Security | | - | | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Strengthen Learning & Instruction | | - | | 118,451 | - | - | - | - | - | (1,676,340) |
| Subtotal Priorities | | - | - | 118,451 | - | - | - | - | - | (1,676,340) |
| ONE-TIME REQUESTS | | | | | | | | | | |
| One-Time Funding Items-PY Removal | \$ | - | \$ | - | \$ | - | \$ | - | \$ | - |
| Subtotal One-Time Requests | | - | | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| SUBTOTAL BUDGET ADDITIONS | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 115,898 | - | 9,104,399 | (34.00) | 2,771,630 | (2.70) | 4,167,375 | (7.30) | (1,222,829) |
| BASE BUDGET REDUCTIONS | | | | | | | | | | |
| Budget Cut-School Based | \$ | - | \$ | - | \$ | (313,709) | (5.00) | \$ | - | - |
| Subtotal Base Budget Reductions | | - | - | - | - | (313,709) | (5.00) | - | - | - |
| REALIGNMENTS | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | - | - | 23,185,884 | 280.00 | - | - | - | - | (262,446) |
| Division Total | \$ | 115,898 | - | 32,290,283 | 246.00 | 2,457,921 | (7.70) | 4,167,375 | (7.30) | (1,485,275) |

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| SUMMARY OF FY 2027 BUDGET CHANGES BY PROGRAM AND SUMMARY GROUPINGS | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------|--------------------|----------------|---------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| General Fund | | | | | | | | | |
| PROGRAMS | | 3402 | | 4701 | | 7403 | | 7404 | |
| | | Homewood | FTE | Division of Schools | FTE | Emergency Preparedness and Response | FTE | Security and Emergency Preparedness | FTE |
| EXISTING SERVICE COMMITMENTS | | | | | | | | | |
| Bus Contracts-Obligated Increase | \$ | - | - | \$ | - | \$ | - | \$ | - |
| Enrollment Changes | | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Existing Services-Other | | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Reclassifications-Requested | | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Special Education-Enrollment Service Levels | | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Year over Year Personnel Cost Change | | (4,911) | - | (422,753) | - | (126,764) | - | 25,765 | - |
| Subtotal Existing Service Commitments | | (4,911) | - | (422,753) | - | (126,764) | - | 25,765 | - |
| EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS | | | | | | | | | |
| Blueprint-National Board Certification | \$ | 49,887 | - | \$ | - | \$ | - | \$ | - |
| Employee Compensation-Placeholder | | 152,591 | - | 2,286,518 | - | - | - | 58,366 | - |
| Employee Compensation-Ratified Agreement | | - | - | 134,562 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Health Insurance | | 4,706 | - | 855,311 | - | (36,452) | - | 74,428 | - |
| Subtotal Employee Compensation and Benefits | | 207,184 | - | 3,276,391 | - | (36,452) | - | 132,794 | - |
| PRIORITIES | | | | | | | | | |
| Cultivate Student Belonging & Well-Being | \$ | - | - | \$ | - | \$ | - | \$ | - |
| Priorities-Other | | - | - | 16,000 | - | - | - | - | - |
| School Safety and Security | | - | - | - | - | - | - | 743,522 | 6.00 |
| Strengthen Learning & Instruction | | (38,708) | - | 1,822,568 | 9.00 | - | - | - | - |
| Subtotal Priorities | | (38,708) | - | 1,838,568 | 9.00 | - | - | 743,522 | 6.00 |
| ONE-TIME REQUESTS | | | | | | | | | |
| One-Time Funding Items-PY Removal | \$ | - | - | \$ | - | \$ | - | \$ | - |
| Subtotal One-Time Requests | | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| SUBTOTAL BUDGET ADDITIONS | | 163,565 | - | 4,692,206 | 9.00 | (163,216) | - | 902,081 | 6.00 |
| BASE BUDGET REDUCTIONS | | | | | | | | | |
| Budget Cut-School Based | \$ | - | - | \$ | - | \$ | - | \$ | - |
| SUBTOTAL BASE BUDGET REDUCTIONS | | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| REALIGNMENTS | | (3,418,729) | (29.00) | (194,246) | - | (261,750) | (1.00) | 245,602 | 1.00 |
| DIVISION TOTAL | \$ | (3,255,164) | (29.00) | \$ 4,497,960 | 9.00 | \$ (424,966) | (1.00) | \$ 1,147,683 | 7.00 |

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| SUMMARY OF FY 2027 BUDGET CHANGES BY PROGRAM AND SUMMARY GROUPINGS | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------|--------------------|----------|--------------------------|----------|----------------------|----------------|--|
| General Fund | | 8601 | | 8701 | | 8801 | | | |
| PROGRAMS | Athletics and Activities | FTE | Intramurals | FTE | Co-curricular Activities | FTE | Total | Total FTE | |
| EXISTING SERVICE COMMITMENTS | | | | | | | | | |
| Bus Contracts-Obligated Increase | \$ 102,000 | - | \$ - | - | \$ - | - | \$ 102,000 | - | |
| Enrollment Changes | - | - | - | - | - | - | (2,281,453) | (24.00) | |
| Existing Services-Other | 75,000 | - | - | - | - | - | 75,000 | - | |
| Reclassifications-Requested | - | - | - | - | - | - | 11,744 | - | |
| Special Education-Enrollment Service Levels | - | - | - | - | - | - | (2,224,400) | (20.00) | |
| Year over Year Personnel Cost Change | - | - | - | - | - | - | (4,207,521) | - | |
| Subtotal Existing Service Commitments | 177,000 | - | - | - | - | - | (8,524,630) | (44.00) | |
| EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS | | | | | | | | | |
| Blueprint-National Board Certification | \$ - | - | \$ - | - | \$ - | - | \$ 1,638,996 | - | |
| Employee Compensation-Placeholder | - | - | - | - | - | - | 14,684,296 | - | |
| Employee Compensation-Ratified Agreement | 173,132 | - | - | - | - | - | 307,694 | - | |
| Health Insurance | - | - | - | - | - | - | 11,789,392 | - | |
| Subtotal Employee Compensation and Benefits | 173,132 | - | - | - | - | - | 28,420,378 | - | |
| PRIORITIES | | | | | | | | | |
| Cultivate Student Belonging & Well-Being | \$ 1,410,209 | 13.00 | \$ - | - | \$ - | - | \$ 1,410,209 | 13.00 | |
| Priorities-Other | - | - | - | - | - | - | 16,000 | - | |
| School Safety and Security | - | - | - | - | - | - | 743,522 | 6.00 | |
| Strengthen Learning & Instruction | - | - | - | - | - | - | 225,971 | (4.00) | |
| Subtotal Priorities | 1,410,209 | 13.00 | - | - | - | - | 2,395,702 | 15.00 | |
| ONE-TIME REQUESTS | | | | | | | | | |
| One-Time Funding Items-PY Removal | \$ (200,000) | - | \$ - | - | \$ - | - | \$ (200,000) | - | |
| Subtotal One-Time Requests | (200,000) | - | - | - | - | - | (200,000) | - | |
| SUBTOTAL BUDGET ADDITIONS | 1,560,341 | 13.00 | - | - | - | - | 22,091,450 | (29.00) | |
| BASE BUDGET REDUCTIONS | | | | | | | | | |
| Budget Cut-School Based | \$ - | - | \$ - | - | \$ - | - | \$ (313,709) | (5.00) | |
| SUBTOTAL BASE BUDGET REDUCTIONS | - | - | - | - | - | - | (313,709) | (5.00) | |
| REALIGNMENTS | | | | | | | | | |
| | 340,708 | - | (93,995) | - | (246,713) | - | 19,294,315 | 246.00 | |
| DIVISION TOTAL | \$ 1,901,049 | 13.00 | \$ (93,995) | - | \$ (246,713) | - | \$ 41,072,056 | 212.00 | |