

# Student Assignment Project Communications Plan

Feedback Phase: January – May 2026

# SAP Communications Plan

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## Feedback Phase: January 2026 – May 2026

This plan prioritizes early communication, intentional listening, and visible accountability, especially for families who are not traditionally engaged.

Stakeholder feedback is important and will be reviewed as part of the SAP process. While not every suggestion can be implemented, community input helps inform the district's planning and understanding of local priorities. Final decisions rest with the Board of Education.

# Guiding Principles

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## Students are our top priority!



**Accessibility:** Multiple languages, formats, and entry points for feedback



**Shared Leadership:** No single individual carries the weight of this work



**Clarity Without Finality:** Scenarios are tools for discussion and feedback, not final decisions



**Internal First:** Principals and staff are briefed before public release



**Respect for History:** Honor DeKalb's growth legacy while addressing today's challenges

# Main Messages - Overall

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The DeKalb County School District (DCSD) is built for 110,000 students. Today we serve 92,000, and enrollment is projected to decline further.

The Student Assignment Project (SAP) is our commitment to invest resources where they matter most, in classrooms with students, not in empty seats. This is about being educationally focused and cost avoidance, creating a district where every child has **access to strong academic programs, well-resourced schools, and meaningful opportunities to learn and grow**, regardless of where they live.

SAP's work and community feedback will shape DCSD for the next generation. This is our moment to analyze the data, listen to our communities, and design a district that is more efficient, inclusive, and stronger.

# Main Messages - Academic

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- **Expanded Academic Access:** Strengthening academic programs including but not limited to AP course offerings and advanced coursework, Dual Enrollment, enhancing CTAE pathways, broadening World Language offerings, Music, and Fine and Visual Arts opportunities. Additionally, strengthening Gifted services and enrichment opportunities.
- **Enhanced Instructional Staffing:** Comprehensive instructional teams, minimized itinerant roles, and strengthened efforts in recruiting and retaining specialized staff.
- **Enhanced Student Supports:** Greater capacity for on-site counseling, mental health services, and targeted interventions.
- **Efficient Use of Resources:** Redirecting funding from underutilized facilities to instruction, technology, and learning environments.
- **Clear Academic Pathways:** Intentional grade-band structures and aligned feeder patterns that support smooth transitions.

# Audiences

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During this phase of SAP (February – May), we are focused on those we need to engage to receive feedback on the scenarios, as well as those that can help us get the word out.



Parents/Caregivers  
(students)



DCSD Staff  
(principals will be key)



Broader DeKalb  
Community



Media

# Reaching Our Audiences

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## Strategic Community Outreach

Community feedback meetings (in person and virtual) are scheduled for:

- February 23 – February 26
- March 23 – March 26

Additional outreach includes speaking engagements at civic/community groups and sharing SAP information with the faith-based community and local municipalities.

**Targeted subgroups include, but are not limited to:**

McKinney-Vento families, students with Diverse Educational Needs, English Language Learners and Bilingual students, Foster Care families, Newcomers, Immigrants, Refugees, and those facing challenges such as transportation and non-traditional work schedules.

# Reaching Our Audiences

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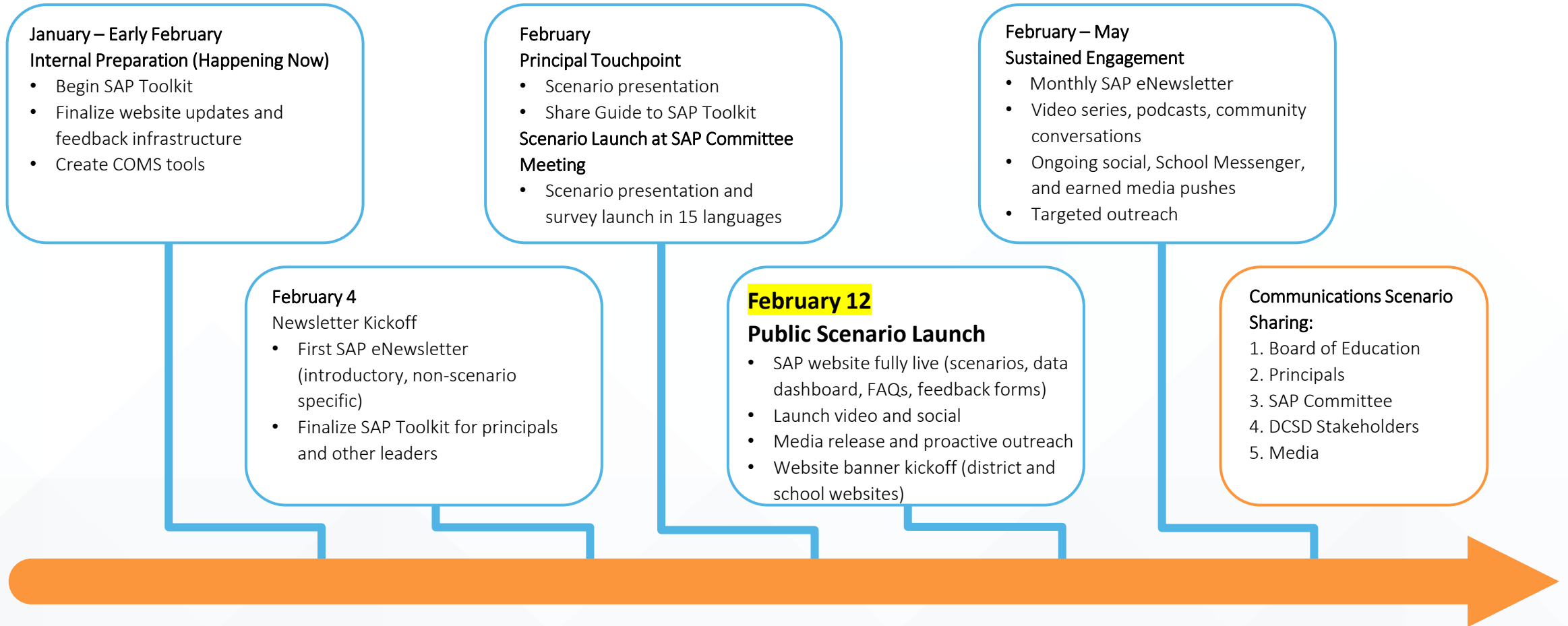
## School-Based Opportunities for Sharing Information

In addition to engaging parent groups (PAC/PTO/PTA), there are many school events happening throughout the year where information about the Student Assignment Project (SAP) will be shared.

### These include, but are not limited to:

- Athletic events
- Fine arts events
- Trainings
- Conferences
- School based events with large populations of families

# Timeline



# Channels

Main Messages

Toolkit

Websites

Social Media

School Messenger

DSTV

## Core Videos

- Dr. Sauce - Message from Interim Supt.
- Person-on-the-Street Videos
- Roundtable Conversation
  - Principal
  - Student
  - SAP Committee Member & Parent
  - HPM Representative
- Motion Graphic
- How-To Dashboard/Survey Video by HPM
- In the Know Podcast
  - SAP Episode with Dr. Triscilla Weaver (aired February 3)

## Earned Media

- Op-ed by Dr. Sauce
- Media release at scenario launch
- Pitch media for in-depth process stories
- Bench model spokespeople\*
  - Ms. Jennifer Caracciolo (overall)
  - Dr. Norman Sauce (overall/academics)
  - Dr. Triscilla Weaver (overall/A&O)
  - Mr. Tracy Richter (technical)
  - Mr. Erick Hofstetter (operations/buildings)
  - Selected SAP Committee members (process)

\* People available for issue related media inquiries

# Toolkit for DCSD Leaders

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## SAP Toolkit

Roll out in February

### Audience:

- Principals
- Directors
- Chiefs
- Board Members

### Format:

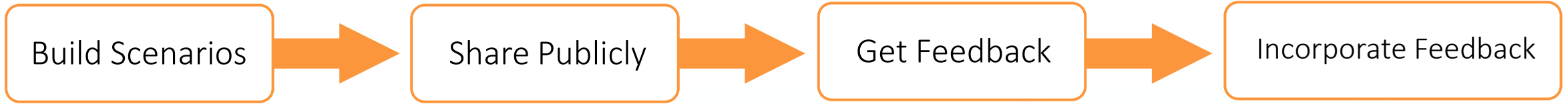
- Virtual rollout
- Downloadable resources

### Includes:

- Message guidance and talking points
- Sample parent and staff emails; newsletter content
- 30-minute meeting kit (PowerPoint, video embed, sample agenda, sample meeting invite)
- Scenario survey QR code and url (15 languages)
- Flyers for backpacks and drop-off lanes (15 languages)
- Posters and FAQs
- Sample speeches/announcements at events
- Postcards with feedback QR code and url (15 languages)
- Text for school signs; provide signs for drop off lanes/schools

# Feedback Design

## SAP Guiding Principles - Feedback Loop: February – May



### Scenario Survey:

- Built by HPM
- Available in 15 languages
- QR code and url

### Feedback Compilation:

- HL Strategy, independent third party, compiles all feedback from surveys and meetings, and provides reports to DCSD and HPM
- DCSD shares feedback with stakeholders

### Additional Feedback Tools:

- In-person focus groups for targeted audiences as needed

# SAP Community and Committee Feedback

[dekalbschoolsga.org/sap](http://dekalbschoolsga.org/sap)

# January SAP Committee Feedback

SAP completed our evaluation scenario committee meeting series in January. They completed a feedback survey. Please see the results below.

## Consolidated Primary vs Secondary Metrics Results Chart

Metric	Primary	Secondary
School Adequacy – How well the facility aligns with the school needs	53%	47%
School Capacity – Number of students a build can serve	56%	44%
School Condition – Overall state of a school’s physical environment and operational readiness	62%	38%
Distance to Neighboring Schools	53%	47%
Forecasted Students within 1 / 1.5 miles	20%	80%
Forecasted Utilization	20%	80%

# January SAP Committee Feedback

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Other criteria metrics the committee would like to consideration:

## Additional Building Metrics

- Age
- Expansion potential
- Neighborhood impact
- Remodeling costs
- Traffic/footprint limitations
- Accessibility
- Safety

## Additional Enrollment Metrics

- Transportation
- Displacement/disruption
- Demographics
- Campus lot size
- Historical trends

## Additional Proximity Metrics

- Transportation costs (busing, public transit)
- Population density and community layout
- Impact of major roads, highways, or railroads
- Distance between schools in a cluster (elementary → middle → high)
- School level differentiation (elementary vs. middle vs. high)

# January Community Feedback

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## **Families strongly oppose breaking up or destabilizing successful school communities**

- Vanderlyn Elementary is a strong, high-performing neighborhood school with excellent academic outcomes, meaningful enrichment opportunities, and a deeply engaged school community. Families value the school's walkable location, well-maintained and efficiently used facility, and strong alignment with Peachtree Middle School, all of which support continuity, connection, and student success.
- Redistricting, closures, or reassignments would damage community cohesion, disrupt children's education, and reduce trust in the district.

## **Kittredge Magnet School (KMS) is a rare and valuable gifted education resource**

- While access is limited through a lottery, KMS provides exceptional opportunities that cannot currently be replicated district-wide due to staffing and financial constraints.

# January Community Feedback

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## **Limited access to magnet programs is preferable to eliminating them entirely**

- Many families believe it is better to offer high-quality magnet programs to some qualified students than to remove them in the name of equal access.

## **Sudden changes to specialty programs and feeder tracks are harmful to families**

- Parents make long-term housing and education decisions based on established pathways; abrupt changes cause disruption that families cannot easily absorb.

## **The district needs clearer communication, transparency, and long-term planning**

- Families are frustrated by unclear timelines, lack of updates, and decisions perceived as driven by enrollment balancing rather than educational quality and community impact.