

May 8, 2025

Student Assignment Meeting Summaries for April 2025

Executive Snapshot of All Committee Meetings

April's three Student Assignment Plan (SAP) meetings advanced the shift from "big-picture" visioning to "nuts-and-bolts" design. Equity, transportation, and community cohesion dominated every conversation, setting the stage for scenario testing this summer.

Meeting Overviews

1. Stone Mountain High School · April 16 (Central Committee)

Parents, teachers, and civic leaders spent two productive hours turning vision into practice. The group worked to draft guiding principles for buildings, boundaries, and programs. Discussions kept circling back to three significant obstacles:

- a. Program access and equity- magnet and specialty seats must follow need, not neighborhood privilege; regional "mirrors" of popular programs won early support.
- b. Boundary & School Design Concepts- A 3-to-5-year review cycle was favored to manage growth without constant upheaval.
- c. Transportation reality- only ~600 of 900 buses are road-ready, so routes must shrink or share service.

The group is committed to using Hanover Research and internal data teams and continues brainstorming ideas for guiding principles.

2. Southwest DeKalb High School · April 23 (Southwest Committee)

With implementation only months away, this session pivoted from ideas to scenario engineering. The Planning Department unveiled interactive maps, cluster overlays, and scatter plots that modeled enrollment, capacity, ride time, and cost. Four themes- Maintaining Communities, Improving Access, Honoring History, Stabilizing Transience- were refined in small groups. Highlights:

- 100+ school walk-throughs have grounded data in on-the-ground context (overcrowded hallways, underused labs, etc.).
- A Summer Institute will pair principals, parents, and transportation planners to score each scenario against equity, fiscal, and logistical metrics.

- Early numbers show clustering could cut cross-county bus mileage, freeing funds for program expansion.

Guiding principles will ideally be trimmed to ≤ 15 and formally adopted before scenario ranking begins.

3. Miller Grove High School · April 30 (Southeast Committee)

The conversation here focused on cluster integrity because many feeder patterns have splintered as new developments filled in. Members reviewed comparative case studies from Fulton, Cobb, and APS, noting pitfalls (community backlash) and wins (improved transportation efficiency). Key threads:

- Boundary realignment must relieve pockets of over-enrollment caused by rapid housing growth along I-20.
- Bus-route math drives urgency: There are 900 routes and 600 drivers. Merging routes could improve efficiencies by realigning clusters and reducing average ride times.
- A forthcoming survey round will finalize the principles of equity, cohesion, and operational feasibility before plans go public.

Cross-Meeting Themes & Insights

1. Equity Is Non-Negotiable

Every committee views universal access as the guiding principle, regardless of ZIP code or socioeconomic status. Regional mirrors of magnets, flexible attendance zones, and early-childhood inclusion surfaced in all three meetings.

2. Transportation Dictates Feasibility

Route shortages, punctuality gaps, and driver recruitment challenges shape every boundary and program conversation. Considered solutions included MARTA partnerships and/or GIS-optimized routing.

3. Data Storytelling Drives Decisions

Hard numbers (Hanover studies, scatter maps) are paired with lived narratives from 100+ school visits and monthly stakeholder videos, ensuring that decisions feel both evidence-based and human-centered.

4. Flexible Boundaries, Anchored Communities

A consensus is forming around routine, scheduled adjustments to stay ahead of demographic shifts, *and* clear change-management plans to preserve community identity during each recalibration.

5. Transparency is a Must

Google-Drive data dumps, exit-ticket surveys, and real-time map demos illustrate a “show-your-work” culture that is winning public trust and boosting participation.