

Open Letter to Diane Ramos Kelly, Superintendent of Valhalla Schools

Diane, as Superintendent of Schools I realize you are very busy, but it does not excuse you from not responding to my last email that addressed how the district has indirectly, and with no proof, accused me of being dishonest.

I would like to now show you proof how you are being dishonest. Last year during the budget cycle I demonstrated to you, the Board of Education, and the viewing audience, with documentation from the district itself, how for the last six years the Valhalla School District has been exaggerating enrollment increases by 44% per year. You and the board chose to ignore me. At that meeting I made my own prediction. I asked everyone to remember the 56 student increase that the district was forecasting for this year, because I was confident that the enrollment would fall far short of that number. I did not realize how correct I would be. The increased enrollment from last year to this year was only 7 students in the entire district, not the 56 students projected last year. I see that the statistical data provided this year conveniently excluded last year's enrollment numbers. There is also now proof that these completely inaccurate predictions are driving up the budget. If you look at last years Virginia Rd. School (K-1-2) enrollment numbers, you can see that an additional section was added to accommodate a projected increase of 12 students for a projected total of 407 students. As you look at this years current enrollment at Virginia Rd. School, you can see there was an increase of only 1 student for a total of 396 students. I would also like to point out that no adjustments were made for next year's Virginia Rd. School section count, as there is one section deleted but also one added for a net of zero. I am scared to think how many times this has happened in the past. It's no wonder our student to teacher ratio is 6.5 to 1.

Because I made you and the board aware of this last year, I can safely say that you are now knowingly perpetrating a public fraud on the taxpayers of the Valhalla School District. If you do not come out publicly, admit what has been happening, and make an attempt to pay back the taxpayers of this district, I will file an appeal with the Commissioner of Education and give the district more embarrassing negative media exposure.

Sincerely
Richard Panetta