## Madder of principa

## Bergtraum teachers & parents rip HS boss

By SUSAN EDELMAN, REUVEN FENTON and JOE TACOPINO

Teachers at troubled Murry Bergtraum HS on Sunday blasted its principal and p.r. guy for bungling a student letter-writing cam-paign to The Post — and one parent group said the school should be shut down.

"This school has been so poorly managed, and the principal takes no responsibility," said John El-frank-Dana, a history teacher at Bergtraum, joining a chorus of educators there.

"It doesn't surprise me at all that

they would screw this up, too."

Mona Davids, president of the New York City Parents Union, which advocates for students and parents, added, "Schools like Murry Bergtraum that continue to fail in educating our children should be closed."

The botched letter-writing campaign came after The Post exposed a scheme at the lower Manhattan school to usher failing students through the system by letting them routinely watch videos

and take tests online for credit.

The school's "blended learning" method pretends to incorporate online learning in the classroom, but simply substitutes computer programs for actual teaching, critics say.

"It's not real blended learning. They click on a computer and rack up credits," said Elfrank-Dana, who is a chapter leader for the United Federation of Teachers.



"It cheapens the value of their diploma, and everybody loses."

The high school — rated "F" by the city Department of Education - had a dismal 51.2 percent graduation rate last year, and hundreds of its students are overage.

Multiple students said the school's \$52,232-a-year "community coordinator," p.r. consultant Kian Brown, organized the letterwriting campaign to The Post to protest the paper's exposé.

Insiders describe Brown as Principal Lottie Almonte's right-hand man.

An e-mail from Brown to students shows that he encouraged them to write letters defending the program, and even provided

them with e-mail addresses.

The students' ensuing e-mails many riddled with errors - also were sent to Schools Chancellor Carmen Fariña.

One student wrote, "What do you get of giving false accusations im one of the students that has blended learning I had a course of English and I passed and and it helped a lot you're a reported your support to get truth information other than starting rumors."

Another student defended the

blended-learning program by saying, "You can digest the information in your own paste."

Yet another called it a "very

awarding program."

Reached by phone Sunday,

Brown denied he had any involvement in the mail campaign.

"I don't know about the letters. I haven't seen the letters. I don't know where they originated from," he said.

Davids, of the New York City Parents Union, called the school's blended-learning approach a "farce" and said the students' letters defending it were simply the result of the failed policy.

"It's truly tragic. It's outrageous," she said. "How could they allow the students to send those letters? It's obviously a lack of common sense." Almonte did not respond to re-

quests for comment. The DOE also did not respond

to The Post.

## Group newspapers. **Fans refuse** to 'Lego'

LOS ANGELES — Actionpacked new releases couldn't stack up to 3-D hit "The Lego Movie," which took the No. 1 box-office slot for the third straight weekend, with \$31.5 million.

**PIERS MORGAN** Viewers "tired of me."

Piers: I'm

own plug

CNN's Piers Morgan says he'll be stepping down from his ratings-challenged talk

show, which he said has "run

The embattled former Lon-

don newspaper editor - who

is being probed in a hacking scandal — bluntly said his cocksure British attitude

"It's been a painful period, and lately we have taken a

bath in the ratings," Morgan told The New York Times. His show has reportedly gotten less than 300,000 viewers sev-

eral times in the past month.

Morgan, who replaced Larry King, added, "I am a British guy debating American cul-

tural issues ... and there is no doubt that there are many in

the audience who are tired of

said Morgan, who once edited

the Daily Mirror, had been in-

terviewed "under caution" -

meaning he was tape-re-

corded - on Dec. 6, by offic-

ers investigating allegations of

phone hacking at Mirror

David K. Li

me banging on about it." The Guardian newspaper

rubbed viewers wrong.

its course."

"Lego" bested "3 Days to Kill" and "Pompeii" on their opening weekends.

The action film "3 Days to Kill" came in second with \$12.3 million in its first weekend.

The gladiator drama "Pompeii" took third place with \$10 million.

## Atlanta on Biebs: There goes the neighborhood

to slow down before he races to Atlanta.

The pop star is reportedly eyeing a mansion in the tony Buckhead community, where neighbors are hardly welcoming him with Southern hospitality.

Residents plan to protest

Justin Bieber might want Monday morning outside a boslow down before he house 19-year-old Biebs is reportedly close to buying.

"We're concerned he'll bring the wrong type of ele-ment into a quiet, residential area," protest leader Harold White told CNN.

"It is our position that a person with his means could certainly find a neighborhood more suited to his eclectic lifestyle."

White's wife started a Facebook page, titled "Protest Justin Bieber Moving to Buckhead."

"Justin Bieber's relocation to Atlanta can be nothing but bad for our children, as

well as the community. Some can't even let their children play in the driveway without fear; he has raced vehicles under the influence before," the page says, in reference to the hard-partying singer's arrest last month in Miami Beach for allegedly resist-

ing arrest, driving under the influence and driving without a valid license. "What's to say he won't

do it again?" Bieber is also being investi-

gated in connection with the egging of a neighbor's home in Calabasas, Calif., that did \$20,000 damage. David K. Li