

Madder of principal

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 campaign 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 Elfrank-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.



MAIL FAIL: The principal and p.r. consultant at Murry Bergtraum HS (left) are being blamed for an ill-advised letter-writing campaign to The Post (right) that included student e-mails (above) full of spelling, grammar and punctuation mistakes.



Piers: I'm pulling own plug

CNN's Piers Morgan says he'll be stepping down from his ratings-challenged talk show, which he said has "run its course."

The embattled former London newspaper editor — who is being probed in a hacking scandal — bluntly said his cocksure British attitude rubbed viewers wrong.

"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 several times in the past month.

Morgan, who replaced Larry King, added, "I am a British guy debating American cultural issues... and there is no doubt that there are many in the audience who are tired of me banging on about it."

The Guardian newspaper said Morgan, who once edited the Daily Mirror, had been interviewed "under caution" — meaning he was tape-recorded — on Dec. 6, by officers investigating allegations of phone hacking at Mirror Group newspapers.

David K. Li

Fans refuse to 'Lego'

LOS ANGELES — Action-packed 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. "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. AP

Atlanta on Biebs: There goes the neighborhood

Justin Bieber might want 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

Monday morning outside a house 19-year-old Biebs is reportedly close to buying.

"We're concerned he'll bring the wrong type of element 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 investigated in connection with the egging of a neighbor's home in Calabasas, Calif., that did \$20,000 damage. David K. Li