

May 1, 2009

To Principal or US History Teacher in New York City Schools:

On behalf of former Secretary of Education and Brooklyn native Dr. William J. Bennett and Manhattan Hunter Science High School, we invite you and/or a team you designate to the premiere presentation in New York City of a unique curriculum package that we believe has the potential to **shape the future of history education**.

When: Thursday, June 4 from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m. (registration begins at 8:30 a.m.)

Where: Manhattan Hunter Science High School, 122 Amsterdam Avenue, Manhattan

What: William Bennett and Team HOPE (History Opens Eyes) present *America: The Last Best Hope* and the Revolution in American History Education

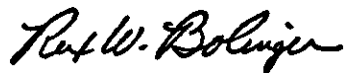
Come listen to William Bennett tell the fascinating stories from *Last Best Hope* which will illustrate that when told as a narrative, history can engage students in history education, and improve both attitudes and achievement.

After reading William Bennett's *America: The Last Best Hope*, a team of Milken Educator Award ([www.mff.org](http://www.mff.org)) recipients, called Team HOPE (History Opens Eyes) formed and joined with Dr. Bennett to address a critical national problem and need. As you are aware, surveys and assessments indicate that American students are either historically illiterate, or think history is boring. Yet, understanding our past is essential in preparing students to be informed and engaged citizens in the future. Team HOPE believes, that *Last Best Hope* is a solution to this problem. It is a compelling, balanced, and comprehensive narrative about our country's people and events, and has even been called a "page-turner." *Last Best Hope* is more than a textbook; it is our history written as drama, romance, action, yes the tragedies, and yes the triumphs.

To support the books, Team HOPE's nationally recognized history teachers developed an online companion curriculum for students and teachers, called the Roadmap. The Roadmap includes thousands of prescreened links that coincide with the book, and lesson activities that emulate exciting history classrooms. See [www.roadmaptolastbesthope.com](http://www.roadmaptolastbesthope.com) to learn about the work of Team HOPE and the curriculum, and also pages 3-5 of this document for a description of the Roadmap and reviews that support *Last Best Hope* for school purposes. The *Last Best Hope* curriculum is already being used in public, private, and homeschools across 36 states and on the approved lists for US History in Indiana, Illinois and New York City. The Indiana State Board of Education recently cited *Last Best Hope* as the one textbook option available that is conducive to student interest.

As principal or US History teacher, we invite you to attend and/or **send a team of history teachers** to this workshop. We believe attendees will learn about a curriculum that can revolutionize the way we teach US History. Administrators and teachers who return the enclosed RSVP (by e-mail or fax) by May 15 are guaranteed a free autographed copy of the book. Please contact us with questions. We hope you and/or a team of history teachers will be able to attend.

Sincerely,



Dr. Rex Bolinger  
Project Director, Team HOPE  
[rbolinger@thomasnelson.com](mailto:rbolinger@thomasnelson.com)

Manhattan Hunter Science HS  
122 Amsterdam Avenue  
Manhattan, NY 10023  
(Located in the Martin Luther King Jr. Complex)  
[www.schools.nyc.gov/School/Portals/03/M541/default.htm](http://www.schools.nyc.gov/School/Portals/03/M541/default.htm)

*America: The Last Best Hope*  
A Revolution in American History Education  
Presentation, Discussion, and Book Signing  
**Thursday, June 4, 2009**  
**9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.**  
Registration and breakfast begins at 8:30 a.m.

### RSVP FORM

I plan to attend: YES or NO (circle one)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Work/School Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ (E-mail) \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to bring/send the following administrators and/or history teachers:

Name/Title/School: \_\_\_\_\_

Name/Title/School: \_\_\_\_\_

Name/Title/School: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions to the Manhattan Hunter Science High School (Adjacent to the Lincoln Center) - Consider all transit directions to the Lincoln Center located on the web at: [http://www.lincolncenter.org/asc\\_load\\_screen.asp?screen=visitorinfo\\_directions](http://www.lincolncenter.org/asc_load_screen.asp?screen=visitorinfo_directions)**

**Parking is Available at the Lincoln Center Public Parking Garage.**

**PLEASE return RSVP by May 15, 2009**

Email to [rbolinger@thomason.com](mailto:rbolinger@thomason.com) or Fax to 317-770-4612

If you have questions, contact Rex Bolinger at 317-770-4604 or [rbolinger@thomason.com](mailto:rbolinger@thomason.com)

## *America: The Last Best Hope - The Roadmap*

To support the books, Team HOPE developed innovative online companion materials for students and teachers, called the Roadmap. The Roadmap is a password-protected, interactive website with thousands of prescreened and relevant web sites supporting the text, as well as lessons and activities that emulate exciting history classrooms. It includes all of the following:

### *HOPE for Students*

1. Presidential terms to help establish historical chronology.
2. Key historical points emphasized in each chapter.
3. Important terms, topics, events, and details.
4. Timelines of important events in American history.
5. Important and key individuals with links to bios and additional information
6. Critical laws, legislation, treaties, and documents.
7. Vocabulary lists to help students improve their SAT scores.
8. Historical maps for major eras and events.

### *HOPE Audio Podcasts with William J. Bennett*

1. Introductions which frame the chapters and get students motivated to read.
2. "Beyond the Chapter" segments with additional stories and thought-provoking dialogue.

### *HOPE for Teachers*

1. Detailed chapter summaries with suggestions for instruction.
2. Maps and charts that can be imported into PowerPoint presentations.
3. Primary source materials including speeches, political cartoons, and important documents.
4. Lesson plans, essays, debates, plays, and memory hooks for use in class.
5. Additional resources for books, videos, Web sites, and professional development activities.
6. Graphical timelines that can be printed or imported into presentation software.
7. Assessment tools including a test bank and other evaluative instruments.

### *Premium Roadmap*

The expanded interactive portion of the Roadmap is called the Premium and includes:

1. "Ask Team HOPE." Classes can submit questions specific to American history and *Last Best Hope*, which will be answered by Team HOPE and posted on the Premium Web site.
2. Classes and teachers can submit essays, paintings, music, projects, videos of plays, and new material that coincides with *Last Best Hope* chapters.
3. Extensive series of mnemonics, plays and debates to reinforce and extend events addressed in the text; resources and links to build awareness and understanding of the recent immigration trends and cultures; and expanded curriculum offerings beyond the Reagan presidency to present times.
4. *Last Best Hope* available through audio recordings, online text, and downloadable to eBook readers.
5. Live Webcam chat sessions with Dr. Bennett.
6. Audiotapes of pre-1900 speeches.
7. *This Day in History* provides interesting facts and stories for every day of the year.
8. Additional monthly Podcasts from Dr. Bennett on historical events such as Veteran's Day, Pearl Harbor, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Memorial Day, and more.

### Here is what is being said about *Last Best Hope* ...

"Reading Bennett's America, I was reminded once again why I love teaching history. It's full of highly entertaining anecdotes and stories and will go a long way toward helping students understand what history actually is—a vigorous debate about what actually happened and the impact of the past on our lives today."

—Dr. Jeffrey Gall, Associate Professor of History, Truman State University

"Bennett has told an excellent story with narrative force in accessible language. I frequently get letters and emails from parents, teachers, and school board members, asking whether I can recommend a U.S. history textbook to them. Today, I would suggest that they read William Bennett's America."

—Dr. Diane Ravitch, Research Professor of Education, New York University

"The role of history is to inform, inspire, and sometimes provoke us which is why Bill Bennett's wonderfully readable book is so important. He puts our nation's triumphs, along with its lapses, into the context of a narrative about the progress of freedom."

—Walter Isaacson, author of *Benjamin Franklin: An American Life*

"Bennett has a gift for choosing the pithy, revealing anecdote and for providing fresh character sketches and critical analyses of the leading figures. This is an American history that adults will find refreshing and enlightening and that younger readers will find a darn good read."

—Michael Barone, Senior Writer, U.S. News & World Report

"High school students are easily bored. However, Bennett *talks* his story like an informed, interesting great-uncle would tell it. He sees and presents the big picture but portrays the pieces of the historical puzzle, often in a tongue-in-cheek manner appealing to teens. Thus, students would be drawn into Bennett's presentation, and they would enjoy his no-nonsense approach."

—Pat Watson, Prince George County, Maryland, Former Social Studies Supervisor

"I would recommend this as a textbook, unhesitatingly. It can be read as early as the high school level and would speak to adult students of all ages. This book conveys what so many of our textbooks today do not – a real love of the story of our country. I hope this book finds itself in the hands of many, many students."

—Lynne Munson, Former Deputy Chairman, National Endowment for the Humanities

"Quotations by Churchill, FDR, etc., and the lilting style of William Bennett's own prose make an experience in reading. It is the 'goosebump' initiating experience that is too often lost to students who might have been inspired by it."

—Dr. Suellen Reed, former State Superintendent of Public Instruction, State of Indiana

"This lively book acknowledges mistakes and shortcomings, yet patriotically asserts that the American experiment in democracy is still a success story."

—*School Library Journal*

"Recommended for all school and public libraries."

—Lisa Ennis, *Library Journal*, June 2007

“Bennett writes this book with careful attention to historical accuracy, and provides a keen and insightful perspective. This book is a welcome and comprehensive antidote to many of the textbooks available in schools today. Many students find reading about history to be a dry and boring task. With this book, students can be assured that the material is factual, readable, and interesting.”

– Dr. Anita Buckley-Commander, Director, Alabama Textbook Program

“Dr. William J. Bennett understands that the narrative of America’s past makes for a rattling good story.”

– Dr. Perry D. Jamieson, Senior Historian, Office of Air Force History

“It captures the magic and drama of history and helps make the subject comprehensible to students.”

– Philip Bigler, Director, James Madison University

“It is written in an engaging, page-turning style, something that cannot be said of many traditional textbooks.”

– Nikki Bray-Clark, Director, Social Studies, Louisiana State University

“*America: The Last Best Hope* is unlike any history textbook because it reads like a novel. Bennett ingeniously blends historical accounts with anecdotes that capture the fascination and interest of even students who were previously unconcerned with history.”

– Sam Kramer, Freshman, Truman State University

“Since I have read these books, my knowledge of American history has increased exponentially. Each volume provided a perfect balance of basic description of American history while still allowing the reader to grasp the critical issues of each time period. I am so thankful for how Dr. Bennett has made American history come alive to me through his true, accurate, and even entertaining description of our great nation. Without doubt, I highly recommend these books for everyone to read, and I guarantee that, like myself, you will find that America is the last best hope.”

– Joel Wellum, High School Senior, Louisville, Kentucky

“Bennett’s magnificent two-volume history belongs on the bookshelf of every thoughtful reader. More importantly, high school and college students deserve the opportunity to experience an account of their country’s history that is simultaneously full, honest, vivid, and so well written. Other books and texts aimed at U.S., A.P., and I.B. history students in the last generation pale in comparison to this magisterial work.”

– Dr. William J. Moloney, Former Commissioner of Education, State of Colorado

“This is not only an excellent work for anyone wanting deeper familiarity with American history – it would also be a superb textbook for an ambitious high school or college course.”

– Chester E. Finn, Jr., President, Thomas B. Fordham Foundation

“It has a refreshing perspective, fascinating sidelights, unfailingly superior writing, and moments of soaring inspiration.”

– Dr. Stephen H. Balch, President, National Association of Scholars