

# First Hope Shares Impact of Digital Education Program That Assisted Students During COVID

You might say a community is only as strong as its schools. Homes for the growth, education, and betterment of our youth, schools are the nucleus of any society, and the detailed work of their staff and teachers often goes unnoticed.

The COVID-19 school closures have shown us how diligently these educators work, and as they say, it takes a village.

As schools adapt to distant learning (some on a hybrid model—half at home, half at school), teachers and students are working double time to ensure a safe environment and smooth transition. First Hope is proud to play a role in assisting these vital educators by providing students with the tools they need to learn and engage while in and out of the classroom.

Over the past few months, First Hope has donated digital education programs to a total of 770 students across 10 local schools. Those schools include four high schools (Lenape Valley Regional High School, Morris Hills High School, Morris Knolls High School, and Hackettstown High School) and six elementary schools (Fredon Township, Hope Township, Knowlton Township, Netcong Elementary, Phillipsburg Elementary, and White Township).

While school curricula are typically focused on core subjects, it is believed that also teaching life skills plays an important role in addressing some of the educational gaps that are necessary to bridge for post-graduate advancement. As such, First Hope was proud to donate two digital education programs that emphasize practical skills to aid students and teachers in this period of distant learning.

The programs, Vault and EVERFI, prioritize personal financing, using the building blocks of students' mathematics lessons to translate into use for everyday scenarios. Vault introduces elementary students to critical financial concepts and skills early in a child's cognitive development while EVERFI, offered to high schoolers, teaches students how to make wise financial decisions to promote financial well-being over their lifetime.

These two digital education programs supplied students with 1,863 hours of learning—a gift to teachers to balance their heavier workload during this difficult period, and a chance for students to learn in a unique way.



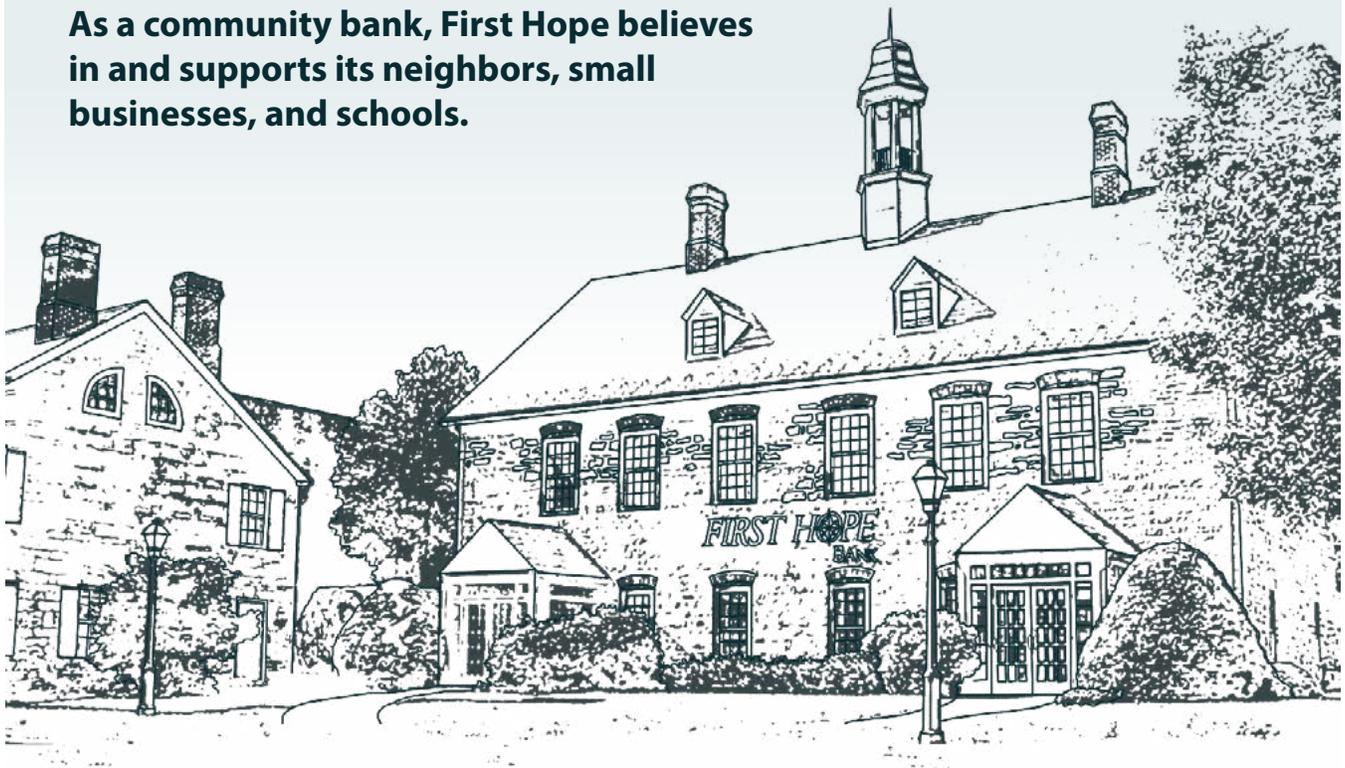
Banks like First Hope know that success is often quantifiable. That's why we're humbled to report that elementary students using this software saw assessment scores increase by 26% (from before the course to after), and high school students' assessment scores increased by 51%.

These are landmark figures, but perhaps the greatest source of satisfaction comes from the students themselves. One Lenape Valley Regional High School

student shared, "I like how this course teaches me things that nobody else has taught me at school or at home. It teaches me very valuable life skills that I appreciate and put to good use."

First Hope is proud to do what it can to assist teachers and students during COVID-19 school closures.

**As a community bank, First Hope believes in and supports its neighbors, small businesses, and schools.**



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