

# Elevate Life & Art

46 Haywood St.  
Asheville, NC

November 24, 2020

To our Elevate Community & Families,

For the last 11 years, Elevate has been able to offer our community quality classes at affordable rates. We have offered those classes through home school tutorials, arts electives, summer camps, and after-school care. We have always desired to be a place that fosters and strengthens community through the simple offering of a “class.” Our teachers and staff have journeyed with many of you and your student(s) in moments that have gone far beyond classroom learning and truly ventured into friendships and being safe places. We have enjoyed this road so very much.

Enter 2020. Specifically, March 2020. The world halted. A virus, stay at home orders, unknowns, and pivot after pivot. The entire world (including yours and mine) was walking in unprecedented territory. I shudder at even using that phrase, but it was a worldwide experience that none of our generation had ever seen. We were actually suffering together. Sickness, job loss, interrupted family rhythms, and the unknown sent us all into survival mode. Elevate attempted to make shifts to help meet those needs. We immediately freed all our families from any payments for the remaining semester while still being able to pay and care for our staff and teachers through the end of the school year. While we paused our after-school care during shutdown, starting in June, Elevate offered summer camp child care for parents returning to work. We did it safe and sanitary and had ZERO positive COVID tests. This fall we pivoted and our teachers offered online home school classes and our physical space, while unused by our regular Elevate families, became a virtual learning center for families in need of childcare.

While 2020 has been a year of pivots and unknowns, Elevate has attempted to meet all these things head on. This being said, Elevate has reached a point where we must now take a pause, a break, a Sabbatical (if you will), as we consider what we are able to be to our community. Lack of registrations, lack of in-person opportunities, a shrinking staff, our limitations due to location, and finances have all contributed to this decision. Starting in January, Elevate will be pausing all of our in-person offerings until further notice. Our virtual learning center and after school program’s last week of operation will be the week of Thanksgiving. For those of you that have students signed up for online classes via our home school tutorials this semester, our current teachers will be continuing to offer those online classes in the spring semester and registration will remain the same.

There is some possible exciting news on the forefront. Many of you know that our downtown location has been a blessing and a curse all at the same time. We’ve been desperate for a space with areas for play, more classroom space, and PARKING (can I get a hallelujah!?). We are currently in negotiations with a facility that may gain us those things - along with some possibilities for more in the future. Please keep us in your thoughts and prayers as we consider a move in the spring. I mean, since we are community and all - you might just get an invite to help us move! (I joke, I joke... or do I?)

The biblical concept of “Sabbath rest” is a gift for all of humanity written into the fabric of creation. Human beings are to work hard for 6 days, but they are to stop from working and creating and on the 7th day - the Sabbath - they are to halt all production or work to consider where they’ve been, what they’ve been trusting in, and to remember that God is with them, cares for them, provides for them, and that we can trust God with our coming week. As Elevate enters into a time of rest and revisiting our mission and purpose and takes time to ask all the practical questions, we promise to keep you, our Elevate community and friends, in the loop.

Thank you for all the support and your friendship over these years. We look forward to the future with hope.

Jason Garris

Elevate Life & Art Director