

ASB 2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR UPDATE



Elevate Health Fair

A Step Beyond hosted its first annual Elevate Health Fair, bringing together youth and families for a day centered on wellness, movement, and community. Nearly 200 attendees enjoyed free giveaways, including lunch and fresh produce to take home, Dr. Bronner's products, Perfect Bars, and more. Community partners shared resources, offered support, and provided free blood pressure screenings. Youth took part in a free dance class, pilates session, and the Magic Foam Experience with Dr. Bronner's.



Arise! Annual Concert

ASB recently wrapped up our annual Arise! concert with two sold-out shows! More than 160 performers, ages 8 to 18, brought 9 original dance pieces to life, choreographed by 12 incredible artists. Students, alumni, staff, and parent volunteers worked together behind the scenes to make it all happen. It was truly a night to remember and we can't wait to share photos and videos from the performances!



El Alebrije 2024

El Alebrije is our annual winter dance performance, a Mexican-American reimagining of The Nutcracker Ballet. This year's production showcased over 150 A Step Beyond students, ages 8 to 18, along with our student tech crew and guest performances from parents and volunteers. The event also featured original artwork from students in grades 3-12, inspired by their hopes and dreams for themselves, their community, and the world.



Family Service Events

Family Services hosted several events for ASB youth and families throughout the school year, including a movie night featuring *Wicked* and a well-attended Teen Positive Parenting workshop led by Jewish Family Service. Additionally, 49 middle and high school students participated in a Youth Healthy Relationships workshop facilitated by Breaking Down Barriers. At the Arise! Concert, students proudly exhibited over 80 diverse artworks—from oil pastels and collages to dioramas—in a vibrant gallery display.

Audition Day

In September 2024, ASB held its annual Audition Day, where youth from across Escondido and San Marcos learned and performed a dance in hopes of joining our ten-year program. ASB offered 70 scholarships, with 62 students enrolling. Highlights included our oldest students leading auditions and strong support from staff, parents, and volunteers.



Visit our website at a-step-beyond.org, to subscribe to our newsletter and stay connected!

SENIORS AT ASB

Our third class of seniors at A Step Beyond graduate from high school this month and 100% are moving on to the college and career programs of their choice this fall! We will celebrate their achievements with a beautiful graduation ceremony on June 13th and are excited for all that lies ahead. This year's graduates are heading to Palomar College, UC Santa Cruz, UC San Diego, CSU Fullerton, CSU San Marcos, CSU Long Beach, CSU Los Angeles, Sacramento State, trade schools, and UCLA. We couldn't be more proud of our seniors!



CEO & Board Chair Nominations

Our Chief Executive Officer, James Wright, was selected as a nominee for the 2025 CEO of the Year award by the San Diego Business Journal. Dr. José Villarreal, ASB Board Chair, was also recognized with a nomination for the Nonprofit Board Leader of Influence award. A special feature on A Step Beyond is included in the magazine. Be sure to check it out!

WINTER CELEBRATION

ASB's Winter Celebration was a joyful, community-filled evening, complete with dancing, games, cookie decorating, and face painting. Families enjoyed a delicious holiday feast prepared by parent volunteers and shopped at our festive Holiday Shop, where all items were generously discounted to support A Step Beyond's programs. Thanks to Hope for San Diego and Restoration Church, we received over 250 toys and 200+ clothing items, along with volunteer support for crafts, games, and expert gift wrapping. Dr. Bronner's donated over 300 gift bags filled with an assortment of their products.

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Dance is the one thing that has kept me going. It's my home. It has taught me to be creative, strong, graceful, independent, to work as a team, and to express myself. Through all the stress and hurdles of life, I always knew I could fall back on the thing I loved.

-Stephanie, ASB alumna

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COLLEGE TOURS, CAREER EDUCATION & WORKSHOPS

As part of ASB's College & Career Readiness Initiative, students took part in a series of college tours to build early awareness of higher education. Highlights included visits to Cal State San Marcos (6th grade), San Diego State (7th), the University of San Diego (8th), and Palomar College (9th), giving students a firsthand look at college life. In addition to college exposure, ASB offers career readiness programming across all grade levels. Students in grades 3–6 participate in six career simulation lessons annually, introducing a wide range of professions through engaging, age-appropriate activities. Middle and high school youth deepen this exploration through eight intensive 10-week career simulation labs—from structural engineering to alternative energy—providing hands-on, project-based learning experiences that help students discover their interests and career pathways. Family engagement also supports this initiative, with over 90 parents participating in academic workshops this past spring on adolescent development, academic planning, and dual enrollment.

ASB IN THE COMMUNITY

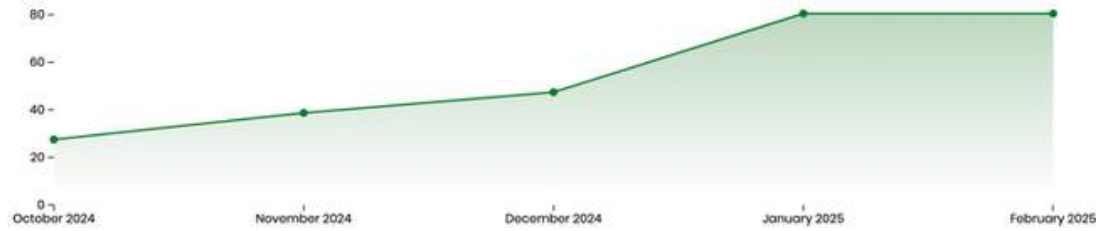
Youth were active in the community, performing at events such as TEDxEscondido, where our Chief Artistic Officer, Jenn Oliver, joined students in a powerful speech and performance on the transformative impact of dance in youth development. Additional performance opportunities included the Tamale Festival, Día de los Muertos Festival, San Diego Youth Dance Festival, Cinco de Mayo Festival, and the Latino Book Festival at MiraCosta College. Through these events, ASB youth are gaining valuable professional experience and sharing their artistry with the broader community.



END OF THE YEAR PARTY

ASB wrapped up the year with a fun-filled celebration honoring our amazing youth! This year's theme was Shrek, and the staff brought the magic to life by dressing up as characters from the movie. The evening included delicious food, a DJ and dancing, a scavenger hunt, games, and special end-of-year awards recognizing our youth. It was a night to remember!

Lexile Growth by Month



Interested in Making a Lasting Impact?

Join A Step Beyond's Board of Directors! As a board member, you'll gain insight into our programs, stay informed on strategic direction and growth, as well as help shape a space where youth are heard, supported, and empowered through college, career, and life.

To express your interest, please contact James Wright, Chief Executive Officer, at jwright@step-beyond.org

BEABLE LITERACY

At A Step Beyond, students in Years 1 to 3 use Beable as a powerful literacy tool to build confidence and strengthen essential reading skills. This is especially important as many of our students speak English as their second language. Beable's individualized learning platform meets each student at their reading level, offering engaging content that connects with their interests and supports college and career readiness. By integrating Beable into our holistic approach, we ensure that students are empowered not just in the classroom but in every area of their lives. The chart above shows their reading level improvements while using Beable from October 2024 to February 2025.

STAY CONNECTED

Make sure to follow our social media accounts & join our newsletter!



[a.step.beyond](https://www.instagram.com/step.beyond)



[astepbeyond.ASB](https://www.facebook.com/stepbeyond.ASB)



[astepbeyond](https://www.linkedin.com/company/stepbeyond)



[AStepBeyond](https://www.youtube.com/StepBeyond)



Visit our website to join our newsletter!



Looking Forward

Join us for the 5th annual Creating Bright Futures Wine Tasting Benefit – an evening of celebration, connection, and shared commitment to youth.

Enjoy a blind tasting of 10 premier wines, all rated 95 points or higher, while taking in golden hour views, savoring delicious food, connecting with fellow supporters, and hearing directly from our students.



Save the Date

