

Boyer Valley Music Students Fundraise for New York City Trip

DUNLAP, Iowa — The Boyer Valley High School music department is striking up community support as students work to raise \$70,000 for a four-day educational trip to New York City next year.

For Music Director Benjamin Schauer, the trip is about far more than travel.

“These trips are some of the most impactful and lasting memories our students have during their four years,” Schauer said. “For many of them, it’s their first time leaving the state, and they are exposed to a world they never imagined could be so bright and beautiful.”

The trip will include approximately 25 high school band and choir students, ranging from current eighth graders through juniors. About half of the high school ensemble has already committed to attending, with the possibility of additional students signing up.

The New York trip will mark the fifth such excursion since Schauer took over the Boyer Valley music program in 2016. The department most recently traveled to New York in 2023.

“I can personally vouch for the impact [these trips] have had on every student that has attended,” Schauer said. “It is my personal mission to ensure that every student that wants to attend is able to, and Mrs. Stowers and I are so grateful for the ongoing support our community shows for our students.”

The group, led by Schauer and Kaylee Stowers, Boyer Valley’s K-12 Vocal Teacher, will travel by plane, departing early on a Thursday morning and returning Sunday afternoon. Students will spend three nights in the city, packing the days with sightseeing and cultural experiences.

The itinerary, still being finalized, includes museum tours, at least two Broadway performances, a visit to Rockefeller Center and Top of the Rock, Madison Square Garden, Central Park and a riverboat cruise around Staten Island. Students will also participate in a clinic with a Broadway musician.

A visit to the 9/11 Memorial is a priority, Schauer said.

“That was a non-negotiable,” he said, noting it was a highlight of the department’s last New York trip.

For many students, the experience will include riding a subway for the first time and navigating one of the nation’s largest cities.

“Most of our kids haven’t even seen a subway, let alone been on one before,” Schauer said. “It’s quite an experience for them.”

To help cover costs, the department has roughly one year left to fundraise. So far, students have participated in street caroling during the Dunlap Shop Hop, hosted a pre-basketball-game pasta feed serving more than 170 meals, and organized a soup supper. The two latter events raised a combined \$2,500.

Additional fundraisers are planned, including a pancake feed in Dow City, a Fourth of July food booth this summer, possible can drives and additional community meals. Traditional spring and fall fundraisers are also in the works.

“We’re always looking for creative options,” Schauer said. “If people have jobs for us to do, we’ll come out and work.”

Students are encouraged to participate in both group and individual fundraising efforts. Some are creating items to sell at craft shows, and parents have been finding creative ways to support the effort.

“We’ve gotten really good at fundraising,” Schauer said.

Although the trip is optional, Schauer emphasized the lasting impact it can have.

“It’s an opportunity to travel and to see a really wide, bright and beautiful diverse world in a manner that they might not get to experience on their own,” he said. “These trips are the highlights of their high school music experience, if not their high school experience. And they’re fun.”

Schauer expressed gratitude to the community for its continued support.

“Thank you to everyone who has supported us so far,” he said.



