

**District 5580 – Rotary Youth Exchange
Outbound Student Applicants – Fall 2026**



Rotary District 5580 is accepting applications for outbound exchange students for the 2027-2028 school year. We invite your Rotary Club to identify and interview potential students, and we encourage your club to discuss the Rotary Exchange opportunity with principals and student counselors in your high schools.

Please note that all candidates and their parents must be interviewed by your Rotary Club to assess a student's suitability for the Rotary Exchange program. If you do not have a Youth Exchange committee, you may want to get your New Generations Committee involved in Rotary Youth Exchange.

The application process begins in September, and District level interviews will be held in early October. Exact dates are still pending. If your club will be sponsoring an outbound candidate, please carefully read the information below for more details, and contact Outbound Coordinator Sam Evans at rotaryyeo@gmail.com or 218-398-0063 for more information or to answer any questions.

If your Rotary Club decides to sponsor an Outbound Exchange Student, your club will be responsible for a **\$500 Outbound Sponsor fee**. ***If your club also agrees to host an inbound student in the same year, this fee will be waived.***

Ideal candidates should possess qualities such as openness, flexibility and an eagerness to delve into new experiences that will enable them to become excellent cultural ambassadors. They should also be prepared to and have interest in learning and living in a foreign language.

Key Qualifications:

- Must be a good student (top half of class or at least a 2.75 cumulative grade point average on a 4.0 scale)
- Between 15 1/2 and 18 1/2 years old at the time of departure (born after February 1, 2009 and born before February 1, 2012)

Other Important Attributes:

- Willingness to go on exchange to whatever country they are assigned
- The initiative to get involved in activities and to make friends in the host country.
- Applicants should have pleasant personality and must be:
 - able to adjust to a new and different culture/country
 - willing live apart from their families and friends for the year
 - open to new and different experiences

Costs for participation:

This can vary by the student's spending habits, the cost of living in the host country, the airfare to and from the country (unfortunately you must purchase a full fare ticket) and host district/country requirements (some require purchase of additional insurance).

District 5580 has an **application fee of \$450** to be paid by the student to cover district costs for interviewing and related activities. This fee is submitted by the student to Rotary District 5580 Youth Exchange in November with their final application. This fee is non-refundable once received.

District 5580 also has a **\$1,500 program fee** that is payable by the student upon acceptance of the country assignment from Central States in mid-January. This fee will be applied to the cost of the required orientations and supplies, and a Rotary jacket.

Students will also be responsible to pay the cost of a health insurance plan through Central States for the exchange year. The cost of the policy for each student was about \$1,200 last year. This amount varies each year.

Passports will be required and have associated fees in the US and Canada. Visas (where required by the host country) will involve fees specific to that country and, while unlikely, could involve a personal visit by student and parents at a consulate or embassy in Chicago, New York, Toronto, or other major city.

The host club typically provides a monthly allowance which may be sufficient for some students. Other students have more lavish spending habits and may expect additional spending money from home. These are discussions to be held between the parents and student. A limited amount of scholarship assistance may be available based on financial need.

Most countries have extra trips to explore their country or other nearby countries. These are optional trips and, although recommended, are usually not required.

For most students, a typical cost for the year is approximately \$8,900 (not including option excursions), although this is very much dependent on your spending habits while on exchange. This does not include what families save while the student is abroad (food, car insurance, etc.)

Rotary provides:

- host families and school
- monthly allowance
- and often lots of extras ...

Children of Rotarians are welcome to participate. Students **do not** have to be involved with or associated with Rotary in any way to apply.

All students are ambassadors of the Rotary club that sponsored them and of their country. They are expected to follow the Youth Exchange program rules, be open to new experiences, and strive to learn the language of the host country.

The student and their own family pay for round-trip air transportation, clothing, health insurance, administrative fees, and incidental expenses. Most other expenses are covered by their Rotary district, club or host family.

Note that District 5580 must complete selections and submit applications to Central States Rotary Youth Exchange by December 1 to get equal chances at country assignments. All applications received after this date may receive a country selection, but only whatever is left over. We will be conducting District Interviews on **input dates here**. **Final applications are due to the Outbound Coordinator by Wednesday, November 18th.** Applications received after that date may not be submitted in time for the December 1st Central States deadline.

To begin the application process, please have interested students complete our preliminary allocation at the following link: <https://forms.gle/hzj42rFiUUfcbyzJ9>. The QR code below will also bring them to that link. Once their information is in the system, outbound coordinator Sam Evans will reach out to both the club and student to assist in the application process.

Please contact Sam if you have any questions or need additional information. Thank you for your participation and support for this important Rotary program!

Sam Evans – D5580 Outbound Coordinator
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