

IF I WERE MAYOR

By Sean Wu, 7th grade, Gilbert Middle School, 

If I were mayor, I would like to operate my city government according to the President Lincoln's picture of an ideal **government of the people, by the people, and for the people**.

For the first objective, "of the people", I would create a mayor advisory group by resident representatives from different races, cultures, backgrounds, and neighborhoods. I would not only work with my elected city council members, but also make direct connections to the residents through the advisory group members. Such direct connections are very important because I would be able to hear the real concerns of the residents immediately. All those mayor advisory group members would be volunteers who can sign up freely. They would be able to submit their weekly feedback on topics like public safety, business support, traffic, social care, schools, housing and planning, waste collection, pest control, etc. I would meet with them once a week to address their concerns either by a townhall style in-person meeting or through online virtual meetings.

For the second objective, "by the people", I would create a voter-friendly environment in my city. The major step is to work with the public transportation system to arrange free rides, extra routes, and extended schedules to pick up people from different neighborhoods to the polling stations, especially those with limited income, disabilities, or seniors with limited mobility. I believe this will improve the fairness of voting and make sure our city government and council are true elected representatives of residents of different color, backgrounds, and neighborhoods.

For the third objective, "for the people", I would keep reminding my colleagues that we are elected to serve the people, not to accumulate rulership over them. I firmly believe any good community should have low crime rate and good education. I would strengthen the law enforcement to improve public safety for everyone, and at the same time, I plan to create a series of training for police officers, ideally designed by my advisory group, so that the officers will have a better understanding and protocol on handling situations involving people from different races, cultures, backgrounds, and neighborhoods. This will create a close connection between the police officers and the community to make sure the officers are well respected, and the crime rate would be reduced. I would also plan to improve public safety by providing a free mental health consultation hotline to those who are in dire need of it. In addition, I would provide financial support to the public library to create free seminars and programs for people so they could learn some basic concepts to study for new certifications and learn new skills for new career paths. For some poor neighborhoods with high dropout rates at schools, I would allocate extra financial aid to support the school districts and provide free or low-cost internet connections.

As a mayor, it is a vital need to show leadership, but most important to remember that you were elected to serve, not to rule.