



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
San Diego Public Library

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**PREVIEW FILM SCREENING LOOKS AT THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS IN
COMMUNIST CHINA**

"Please Vote For Me" shows school kids learning their first lessons about democracy

San Diego, CA...The San Diego Public Library invites you to a film screening of *Please Vote For Me*, a spirited documentary from China that chronicles cautious experimentation with democracy in a third-grade classroom in Wahun province. The screening takes place at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, September 26 in the auditorium of the Central Library, located at 820 E Street in downtown San Diego. This event is free and open to the public.

Please Vote For Me captures many elements of life in China today that are missed by the magazine cover stories and astounding growth statistics. This story unfolds far from the giant factories, crowded markets, or even picturesque villages. Instead, these classrooms are state-of-the-art and the children's homes look remarkably like middle class urban homes in the West. The film provides a private view of a microcosm of contemporary Chinese culture.

The film is also a classic election drama, albeit with 7-year-olds in the world's largest Communist country. The three candidates, two boys and a girl, are chosen by the teachers, but they conduct real campaigns and are chosen in a free election. Ironically their goal is to become the student charged with maintaining order and reporting rule violations to the teachers. Weijun Chen, who also directed the award-winning film *To Live Is Better Than to Die*, travels home with the candidates, each a product of the one-child policy, where over-eager parents coach and cajole their child. They even participate in a little preelection gift-giving in an effort to manipulate the race! The intense politicking reveals that though systems of government may differ broadly, human nature may differ considerably less.

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Community Cinema is affiliated with the independent media organization ITVS or Independent Television Service. ITVS Community Cinema is a monthly screening series that pairs independently produced documentary films with leading organizations working to resolve related social issues in communities across the country. All film content featured in ITVS Community Cinema will broadcast nationally on the Emmy Award-winning PBS series Independent Lens. *Please Vote for Me* will air in October.

Learn about other events at the San Diego Public Library's Central Library and 34 branches, find links to numerous additional resources, or search for materials in the Library's catalog online at www.sandiegolibrary.org.

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