

Chino High yoga popular

"It releases stress that I have, that has been building up all day," sophomore Regina Guzman said recently of a new yoga class offered this school year at Chino High. "It's in the middle of the day, and it just refreshes me."

Regina is one of 43 students taking the yoga class at Chino High for physical education credit. It is the only yoga PE class offered in the district, teacher Felicia Ambrosia said.

The class has been so popular, that this fall Chino High plans to offer two periods of it.

Relaxation breathing is incorporated into the yoga routines that involve stretching the body in different poses as soothing music plays in the background.

Ms. Ambrosia, who has been teaching yoga for nine years for Chino Valley YMCA and the City of Chino, said yoga improves balance, well-being and increases upper body strength.

"Students learn how to manage stress through relaxation breathing," Ms. Ambrosia said. "Yoga allows a student to recognize the potential of their overall muscular strength and flexibility. Yoga increases and improves a sense of balance, not only in the body but the mind as well...It's amazing how increasing the flow of blood throughout the body and relaxing one's breathing can affect us on a personal level. Yoga will change your life on so many levels. It not only affects the individual practicing yoga, but it also affects the company they keep."

Sophomore Deanna Barajas said the class helps her improve her flexibility, so she can do better in the sports she plays. "It's just a whole new experience," she said. "It releases the stress of school...I'm in other sports, so it helps me in other movements."

Sophomore Natalie Mosqueda said the class has taught her to "be calm." She also uses the methods she has learned in the class at home.

"It has made me so much more flexible," sophomore Denise Illarmo said. "It helps me get my inner peace, and get my inner calm."

After just one class, another student taking the class at Chino High relaxed and realized her stress over an English class was unfounded, Ms. Ambrosia said.