

MOVEMENT FOR MEDITATION

All-School Meditating Sessions?

Meditation has been proven to help reduce anxiety and stress, and that is the main reason Spanish teacher Anna Maki-Birchler wants to start offering all-school meditating sessions.

Students who are unaware of how to deal with anxiety and stress could find a way to deal with it through the practice of meditation, which helps relax and clear the mind as well as helping to improve the heart and body, according to Maki-Birchler.

"Something has to be done. We need to teach our students the life skill of dealing with anxiety. I have students come back from college and tell me, 'I still meditate before taking a

test,'" said Maki-Birchler, who also sponsors Yoga Club.

People are often misinformed about the concept of meditation or simply don't take it seriously. Meditating is sometimes viewed as strictly religious or spiritual, but in reality it's up to the person's beliefs as well as their own mind and body.

"If you're new to meditating, I would definitely say to take it seriously, breathe deep and focus. It's really beneficial," said senior Bailey Ferrera.

Meditation has been proven to increase academic performance by helping with memory and reading comprehension, according to the Association for

Psychological Science. Not only does meditating help improve academics, but it also benefits the body by increasing empathy and compassion. A study done at Harvard Medical School indicated that participants who joined in an eight-week program of meditating an average of 27 minutes a day showed changes in the brain that dealt with memory, stress and self-awareness.

Schools around the nation have begun to implement meditating sessions because it's been proven that meditation benefits a person's mental health and academic performance.

"If there were little techniques like taking deep breaths, and

focusing in on something like that was a technique that all teachers could just remind kids of, I think that is where I can see school-wide implementation," said assistant principal Kevin Kooi.

Community Council, a group of teachers from all departments, and administration have been considering and discussing introducing school-wide meditation time and techniques to students, according to principal Clark Mershon.

Written by Leidy Venegas

1. Set a certain time during each day to meditate.

2. Find a quiet and peaceful place to meditate.

3. Begin with a comfortable but straight posture.

4. Close your eyes and spend a few moments to focus and relax your mind.

5. Concentrate on breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth.

6. Start on slow and easy stretches while still focusing on your breath.

TIPS TO MEDITATE



Graphic by Leidy Venegas and Kelsey Bennett
Source: The Art of Living