### Sober schools

Immersion program teaches sobriety to formerly recovering addicts.

By Anna Gorman
Kaiser Health News

SEATTLE — It’s the last class period of the day. The students lean back on couches and turn on music, describing the most important day of their lives: the day they became sober.

For Marques Martinez, that date was Nov. 15, 2016. Until then, he used OxyContin, Xanax and nearly every other drug he could get his hands on. He had been suspended from school for selling drugs. “I knew what I was doing was wrong,” he said. “But I didn’t think there was any other way.”

Two years ago, Martinez’s parents sent him to an in-patient treatment center and then enrolled him in this unusual high school, Interagency at Queen Anne, which opened in late 2014. IAQ, Martinez, 17, learned about the school from a counselor at Queen Anne, and he was hesitant at first. But he really liked the fact that the school is one that he could trust. “I felt safe here,” he said.

The Seattle public school campus, known as a recovery support center, is designed for students learning to lead lives of sobriety while they earn their diplomas. The rough 20 students attend classes in math, language arts and physical education, and they complete other coursework online. The school takes regular with a counselor or a therapist to address the students’ progress and to ensure that their students are on track to get their diplomas. Students meet in the school lounge before and after school.

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