**Attachment 4:** Summary of Findings from the Process Evaluation of Seattle’s

School Emphasis Officer Program

Conducted by George Mason University[[1]](#footnote-1)

September 22, 2015

**Summary of Findings**

This process description and assessment examines Seattle’s School Emphasis Officer (SEO) program, an initiative operated by the Seattle Police Department (SPD) as part of the Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative (SYVPI). The report is based on an examination of program documentation, interviews with key stakeholders, and observations of SEO activity in three Seattle middle schools conducted by the Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy at George Mason University and the University of Maryland for the City of Seattle Office of City Auditor.

**The SEO Program**

* Police officers are assigned to four public middle schools in Seattle (Denny International MS, Washington MS, Aki Kurose MS, and South Shore K-8).
* Schools are selected for truancy, suspension, and discipline issues and location within SYVPI network areas.
* Officer activities include school support; safety and security; education; SYVPI referral and follow-up; and law enforcement. Law enforcement activities are minimal. Most activities involve prevention and intervention with at-risk students.

**Program Strengths**

* Potential for integration with services. Police officers can fall back on a network of services through SYVPI rather than defaulting to law enforcement responses for troubled youth.
* Potential to improve police-community relations. The SEOs build trust among school students, which could help to change perceptions of the police in school and the wider community.
* Non-law enforcement focus. SEOs minimize their involvement in the disciplinary process and do not arrest students. However, their information gathering activities could be shared with others for law enforcement purposes.

**Program Challenges**

* Clarity of program structure and relationship with SYVPI. The day-to-day operation of the program occurs on an ad hoc basis and the relationship between the SEOs, SPD, SYVPI and the schools is not fully defined.
* Evaluability. The program lacks a logic model and outcome measures and cannot be evaluated for effectiveness.
* Sustainability. The program lacks a formal structure and is driven by individual personalities and relationships.
1. Process Evaluation of Seattle’s School Emphasis Officer Program, Charlotte Gill, GMU, Denise Gottfredson, University of Maryland, Kirsten Hutzell, Lycoming College, September 22, 2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)