



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Castle Rock Police Department, Douglas County Schools introduce second SRO-therapy dog team**

**Media availability on Friday, Sept. 9 – details below**

**When:** 9:30 a.m., Friday, Sept. 9

**Where:** Mesa Middle School, 365 Mitchell St. in Castle Rock

**Who:** School Resource Officer Luke Godfrey; Mesa Middle School Principal Jarod Nicholson; Mesa Middle School students

**What:** The Castle Rock Police Department and Douglas County School District will introduce police therapy dog, Rocket

**Note:** Please check in at Security with ID

Woof, woof! The Castle Rock Police Department and Douglas County School District are expanding their School Resource Officer and therapy dog program. SRO Luke Godfrey and Rocket, a 1-year-old Husky mix, are now serving Mesa Middle School students and staff.

“We could not be more excited to grow this program,” said Police Chief Jack Cauley. “We saw incredible results with our first SRO-therapy dog team at the high school level – everything from helping students with anxiety and panic attacks to assisting in our classrooms with our students with special needs. This is an incredible program that we’re ready to bring to our middle school community.”

Rocket joins CRPD from the Brevard County Sheriff’s Office Paws & Stripes College in Florida. In addition to completing a 40-hour Law Enforcement Investigative Therapy Dog Course through BCSO, Officer Godfrey and Rocket hold two additional national certifications as a therapy dog team. That includes the Canine Good Citizen through the American Kennel Club and the Multi Discipline Therapy K-9 certification through United K9s.

Before entering the Paws & Stripes College program, Rocket went through seven weeks of temperament testing followed by 12 weeks of therapy dog training.

Interventions and interactions with Rocket will take place in designated areas only in order to be sensitive to those with allergies or fears, and to mitigate any accidental exposure. The police therapy dog and SRO teams are insured for liability.

In April 2021, CRPD and DCSD became the first in the state to permanently pair a school resource officer with a certified therapy dog. Officer Godfrey and Rocket join Castle Rock Police SRO Scott Gillespie and therapy dog Buttercup who are currently assigned to Castle View High School.

“In the short month we’ve been together, Rocket has already made a noticeable, positive impact,” Officer Godfrey said. “Rocket has the ability to lift the spirits of teachers, staff and students alike. I can’t wait to see all we can accomplish together.”