

Scott E. Knief
Superintendent of Schools
ph. (508) 866-6160
fax (508) 866-2920
KniefS@carver.org



Dr. Meredith Erickson
*Assistant Superintendent
of Teaching and Learning*
ph. (508) 866-6172
EricksonM@carver.org

CARVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

3 Carver Square Boulevard, Carver, Massachusetts 02330-1200

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 8, 2024

Contact: Gina Marie Russell
(508) 866-6160
russellg@carver.org

STUDENTS BRING GINGERBREAD HOUSE TO LIFE

It's been said, the best way to bring Holiday cheer is singing loud for all to hear, but not at Carver Middle High School where students led by Food and Nutrition Services Director, Theresa Vernazzaro and Culinary Department Teacher, Dan Portelance constructed a life-sized Gingerbread House to spread holiday cheer.

The Gingerbread House, proudly displayed in the main foyer of Carver Middle High School stands 12 feet high with a 6 square foot base was a collaborative effort of Food Service staff, Culinary classes, Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology (MET) Innovation Pathway classes, 7th grade math classes and the facilities department.

A combination of architecture/engineering and mathematics led the planning by senior student Brandon Gainey who created the architectural drawings as a part of his MET pathway classes and also printed out the sugar cookie cutter for the roof and Middle School Mathematics teachers, Douglas Fies and Stacey Carter who offered their grade 7 students the opportunity to calculate how much gingerbread was needed to cover the structure.

Once the planning stages were completed, Ray Amaral, Carver Middle High School Maintenance, built the wooden structure needed to hold the house together and culinary students under the leadership of Dan Portelance and Food Service workers baked 426 lbs of gingerbread dough tiles and 100 lbs of sugar cookie roof to complete the structure. Construction began on Wednesday, November 22 and was completed prior to students leaving for the Holiday break.

Dr. Erickson, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning explained that the Gingerbread House Project is a great example of Carver Middle High School's objective to offer powerful learning experiences through Project Based Learning initiatives, incorporating real-world problem solving, hands-on/minds-on skill development, and critical thinking in teams that prepare students for college and career.

The project has also allowed the culinary students to use the kitchen in the food services department while the culinary/hospitality pathway's kitchen is under complete renovation and remodel for their use in the future to expand and enhance the pathway.

The project was just one of the ways the Food Services Department partners with the Culinary classes to offer real world experiences and to engage all students in their school and nutrition. Food and Nutrition Services Director, Theresa Vernazzaro has worked with Chef Portelance and his students in a Menu Collaboration contest as well as encouraging students to try new foods on "Try It Tuesdays".

The food services department works with the Environmental and Agricultural Science Pathways as well for project based learning with their hydroponics systems which also feed the 4 endangered Red Bellied Cooter Turtles being raised in the Head Start Program through Carver Environmental Science classes.

photos courtesy of Carver Public Schools



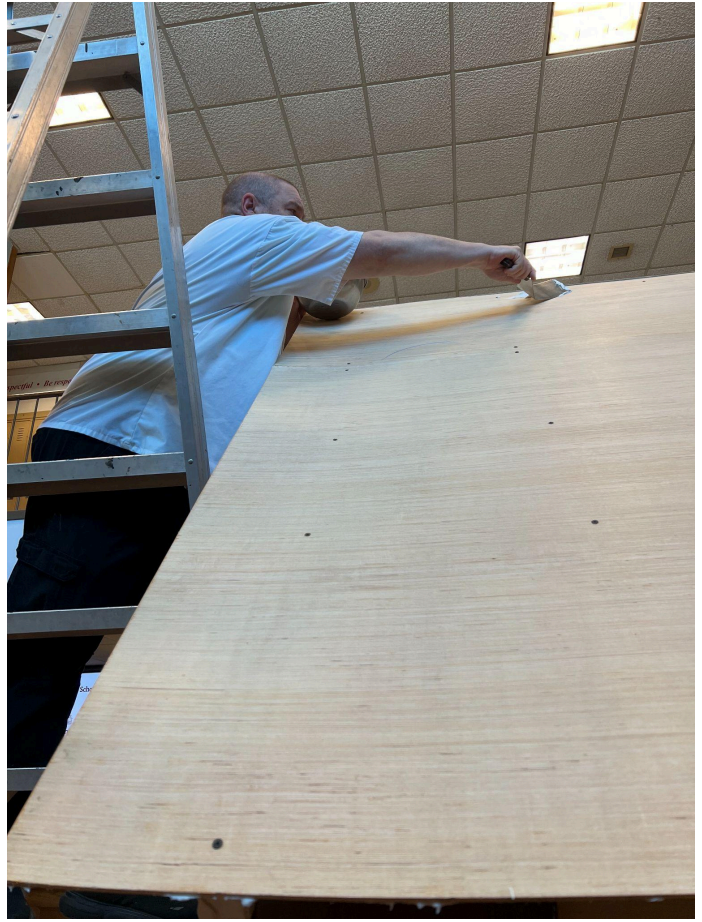
Life-Size Gingerbread House constructed in the Main Lobby of Carver Middle High School



Life-Size Gingerbread House constructed in the Main Lobby of Carver Middle High School



Life-Size Gingerbread House constructed in the Main Lobby of Carver Middle High School



Chef Portelance and Students begin construction on the icing and sugar cookie roof



Students apply the baked Gingerbread foundation to the structure.