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### **A Community of Learners Building a Community**

Every one of the 663 students at Madeira Elementary School (MES) recently played a part in creating a replica of the main street of their home town, using Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics

A cardboard replica of portions of Miami Avenue, Madeira's main street, was created over a three-week period in the school's STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) lab. The lab was created last summer to provide all of the district's K-4 students the opportunity to freely engage in project-based learning experiences that highlight the 5Cs - collaboration, communication, creativity, critical thinking, and citizenship. Unique experiences are provided that help students grow and learn together in teams, and teach them how to work through problems together.

Working in groups of two or three, the school's third and fourth grade classes used Google Earth to view the buildings. After calculating the precise scale and proportions of close to 60 Madeira restaurants, shops, offices and homes, they designed and created the buildings – including steps, windows, and doors. Second grade classes learned about electrical circuits using twinkle lights to make lamp posts light up in the village. They also created railroad tracks, fire hydrants, flowers and signs using 3D printing pens. Using scientific research to figure out the best combination of ingredients to replicate snow, Kindergartners and first graders then applied the mixture to rooftops and walkways. They also added candy and other decorations to complete the gingerbread effect.



*Pictured (l to r): Kindergartners Leah Perin and Isla Cloran work together decorating a Madeira landmark*



*Pictured above: Students in Mrs. Bell and Mrs. Volz' classes with the completed village, which was on display during the school's conferences.*

High school student Elyse Hertzman mentored some of the elementary school students on the STEAM project. "They had to collaborate on what the buildings realistically look like," she commented. "I loved watching the kids work together to recreate our town. They seemed excited to be part of a project beyond just themselves, which was amazing to see."