

Teen baked her grandfather's ashes into sugar cookies and brought them to school, police say

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A Davis high school student allegedly baked her grandfather's ashes into a batch of sugar cookies and gave them to classmates, some of whom were aware they contained human remains before they ate them, authorities said Tuesday.

A female student at Da Vinci Charter Academy, a public charter high school, brought the cookies to school on Oct. 4 and gave them to at least nine other students, said Davis Police Lt. Paul Doroshov. Some ate the cookies without knowing the extra ingredient and were horrified, he said. Others knew.

"Some students knew beforehand and still consumed the cookies," Doroshov said.

Asked if the allegation seems credible, Doroshov gave a long sigh.

"Yeah."

A school resource officer reported that two female students were involved in bringing the cookies to school, Doroshov said. Their relationship is unclear, but the girls are not siblings and the deceased man was the grandfather of only one of them, he said.

Doroshov said police opened a case and have been trying to determine which penal code would apply to baking human remains into food. Officers considered a California penal code section regarding the disposal of human remains in an improper manner but public-nuisance charges might be more appropriate, he said.

Authorities are working with the school to determine how best to proceed, he said.

The students have been cooperating with the investigation, Doroshov said.

Andy Knox, a student at the school, told KCRA-TV that he was just about to go into his environmental science class when a girl in the same class offered him a cookie. When she told him there was a special ingredient, he assumed it was marijuana.

“I didn’t believe her until she pulled out the urn,” he said.

Knox said that the cookie didn’t taste unusual but “if you ever ate sand as a kid, you know, you can kind of feel it crunching in between your teeth. So, there was a little tiny bit of that.”

He said that the cookie contained “tiny gray flecks” and that the girl had once offered him the ashes if he switched seats with another student in the classroom.

Da Vinci Charter Academy Principal Tyler Millsap said in a letter to parents that “this issue going on right now has been particularly challenging and our staff has responded appropriately and in the most respectful and dignified way possible for all the students and families involved.”

Millsap said he regrets that the story “has been taken up by the media” and said that there is no health risk to any students.

“I can say that those who were involved are remorseful and this is now a personal family matter and we want to respect the privacy of the families involved.”