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Advance R-IV Schools to Get Safe Room

JUNE 17TH 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

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*Submitted by
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Advance, Missouri - “Missouri’s children are our most precious and important resource, and ensuring that they not only receive a good education, but that they are safe and secure in their schools should be our top priority,” Gov. Nixon said. “We have seen too often the devastation that tornadoes and severe weather can bring to communities in Missouri and neighboring states, and that’s why I’m committed to utilizing available funding wherever possible to help build community safe rooms, particularly in our schools.”

The Governor’s announcement came during a student assembly at Troy Buchanan High School. The Lincoln County R-III School District has proposed building a 12,600 square foot safe room that would shelter about 1,800 people, enough capacity for all students, faculty and staff on the high school campus. According to the district’s plans, the safe room space would also be utilized as a performing arts center and community meeting room.

Gov. Nixon also announced he has authorized proceeding with four other school safe room proposals:

- St. Charles County: A proposed 7,700 square foot safe room to shelter about 1,200 people in a new school that would be built by the Orchard Farm R-V

School District.

- **Stoddard County: A proposed 6,700 square foot safe room to shelter about 1,000 people in the Advance R-IV School.**
- Texas County: A proposed 4,600 square foot safe room to shelter about 700 people in Plato Elementary School in the Plato R-V School District.
- Webster County: A proposed 4,000 square foot safe room to shelter about 500 people in a new permanent early childhood center in the Fordland R-III School District.

Community safe rooms are specially designed and engineered structures built to withstand 250 mile per hour winds, often utilizing 14-inch precast concrete and steel-reinforced doors. Walls and roof sections are capable of withstanding impacts from windborne debris that can act as missiles.

Missouri currently has 104 completed safe rooms across the state. Since Gov. Nixon took office, he has approved or Missouri has moved forward with 188 community safe room projects, 121 of which are in schools, utilizing Federal Emergency Management Agency hazard mitigation grant funds. In all, the completed projects and those being designed and constructed in the state would be capable of protecting more than 210,000 Missourians. The FEMA program provides 75 percent of funding for pre-approved safe room projects that meet all design and construction standards. Local grant recipients pay the remaining 25 percent of safe room costs.

The federal share of the projects the Governor announced today is approximately \$5.7 million. Local applicants still must meet all federal program requirements.

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