

Pleasant Grove Independent School District's Board of Trustees approved plans for the new elementary school following an executive session Tuesday.

The 70,000-square-foot building will include 33 full classrooms, a gym, cafeteria, offices, special education space, a media center and four hallways or pods.

Designed by Lewis Architects of Little Rock, the angular building features a glass wall at the front of the building, in addition to circular windows.

The safe rooms are actually storm shelters, which the 2015 International Building Code, adopted by the city of Texarkana, Texas, in December 2015, requires to be included in all new school construction. The rooms will be equipped with special water, electrical, plumbing and ventilation systems and will be built to withstand wind speeds up to 250 mph, equivalent to the force of an F-4 tornado.

Interim Superintendent Roger Hailey said now that they have approved an initial design, work can begin on the design of the mechanical and plumbing aspects of the project.

"The goal is to have it open by August 2020," he said. "Once the plans are done, we can get started."

Funds for the new school come from a \$19.9 million bond voters approved in May 2018 for the new building, security improvements and technology upgrades.