

School Facts

Editor's Note: This is the fourth in a series of informative articles dealing with the city schools and their proposed budgets. The material is under sponsorship of the Classroom Teachers organization, and any questions may be directed to Marilou O'Connor, 123 Grant Street. Today's article deals with the tax base and the six per cent limitation.

By MARILOU O'CONNOR

Voters in the Klamath Falls area might well consider the possibility of school opening later than planned and therefore closing later next spring. This is because schools cannot open their doors until a budget has been approved within which the schools can operate.

It is certainly the right and duty of every voter to take his part in the operation of his schools. Although personnel is hired to administer the actual operation, the voter should be cognizant of the legal requirements, and one of these is that schools must have an approved budget before contracts can be signed, teachers hired, even before a three cent stamp can be bought. In a word, before any funds can be expended. The 1957-1958 school budget ends July 1. From that date until a budget is approved schools in the Klamath Falls districts will be inoperable.

One part of the legal facet of school operation is the relation between the tax base and the six per cent limitation. Oregon law provides that any school district whose proposed operational budget exceeds its tax base by more than six per cent must submit its budget directly to the voters for their approval. By definition in the law, the tax base is the total amount levied by the school district in any one of three preceding years in which there was not a special election. If the budget amounts to only the tax base plus not more than six per cent of the base, the budget need not be voted upon, but may be studied by the budget committee and the school board, accepted by them, and used as a basis of operation.

In the Klamath Falls school systems, the budgets for each of the districts exceeds the tax base plus the six per cent limitation. The tax base for the elementary district is \$76,672. The operating budget for this district in the school year 1957-1958 was \$1,123,412.

Union High School District No. Two has a tax base of exactly nothing. The budget for the high school has always been submitted to the voters for approval at a special election. Until, if the voters so desire, an amount is established at a special election, the high school has no tax base, and cannot operate either outside of or within the tax base plus six per cent without a special election.

Because of the requirements of the law, it is impossible to open school without the approval of some sort of budget that has been voted upon at a special election in the school districts. The budget is the item that gives the school board the legal right to expend money and to incur obligations in the name of the school districts.

The budget committees of the two school districts in the Klamath Falls school systems have, at the direction of the voters, revised the budgets, with a total tax levy savings of \$46,161 in the elementary district and \$48,511 in the high school district. With the addition of the property tax offset monies, an estimated \$30,000 in the elementary district and \$65,000 in the high school district, a substantial savings should result for the taxpayers in the two districts.

The special school election of May 5 resulted in the failure of the budget to pass. Both budgets, revised, will again be presented to the voters, the elementary budget on June 22 and the high school July 7. Legal requirements are set down in school law concerning these special school elections and the publication of both the elections and the budgets.

Approximately 30 days are required to publicize the budget itself. This includes two printings of the complete budget, and an open meeting on the budget for the benefit of those voters and taxpayers who wish to air objections and discussion of the items included. Following this period of one month, the special election date is set. Again, approximately 30 days are required to publicize the election, including two printed notices of the date. All in all, approximately 60 days is required to present the budget for approval or disapproval at a special school election.

If the budgets fail to pass during the forthcoming elections, it will mean that the budgets could not again be presented until the middle part of September.

Since the schools cannot open until they have a budget within which to operate, and since an approval so late in the year will create many administrative problems, it is a certainty that the city schools will not open at the regular fall date if the budgets are beaten again.

Dunsmuir Phone Boss Transferred

DUNSMUIR — The transfer of Ed Serinus, manager of the Dunsmuir-Mount Shasta office of the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company, has been announced.

Serinus's new assignment is Quincy, California. He has been manager of the Dunsmuir-Mount Shasta office for the past three years and during that time has been active in the chamber of commerce and Lions Club.

Succeeding him will be Floyd Hill, Yreka P.T.T. manager, who will divide his time between Yreka and Dunsmuir.

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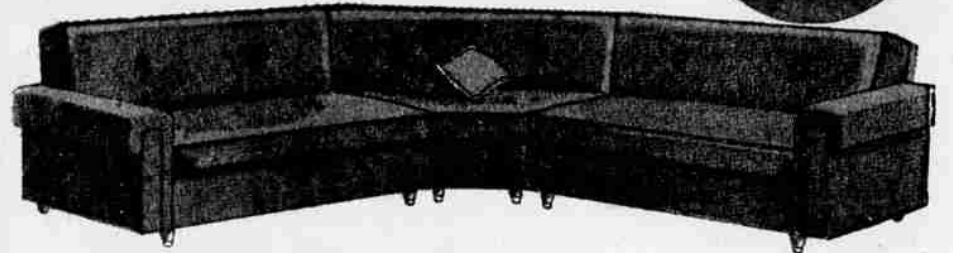
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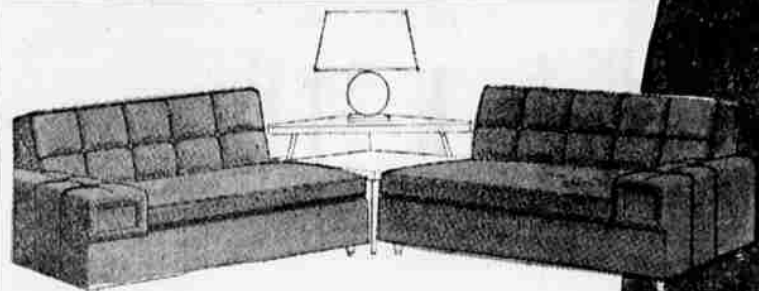
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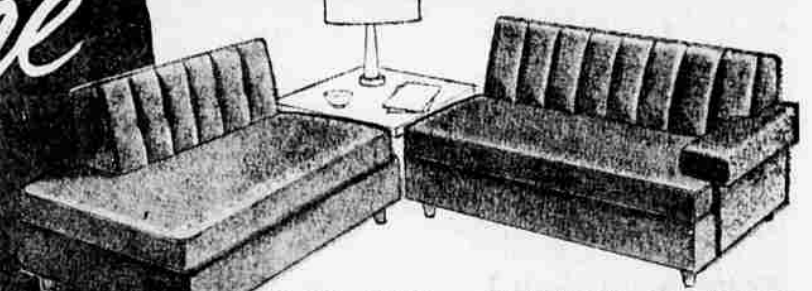
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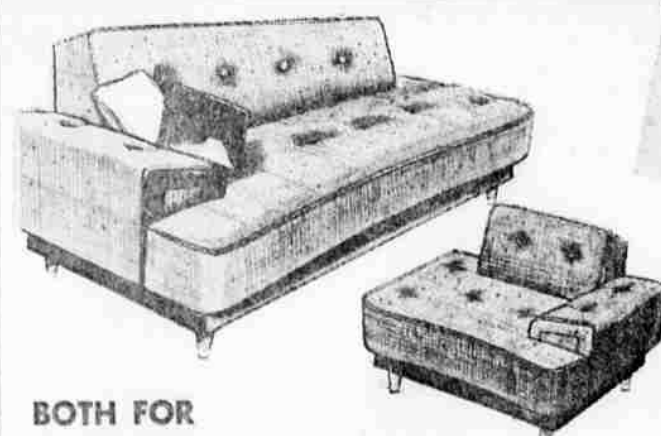
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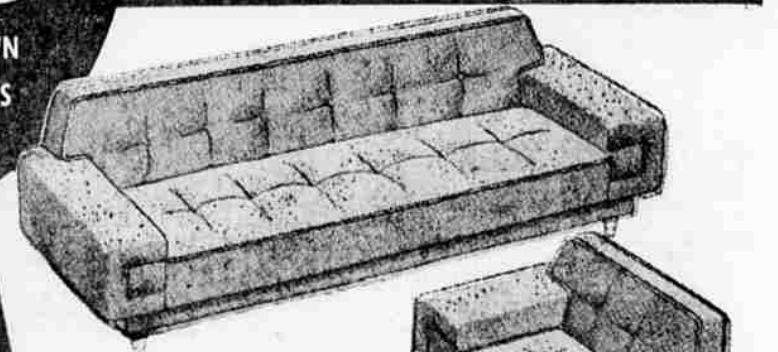
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