

## DON'T BUY THOSE TICKETS FIRST

The district has made a policy change on the granting of Code 8s. Recently several paraprofessionals have had Code 8 requests denied at HR level first and now the denials are occurring at the building levels.

In several cases the paraprofessionals had made travel plans and even prepaid for airplane tickets etc. Those situations have been resolved. However a word to all is that now you need to get approval first before confirming those plans. Please read on!

The code 8 situation has been a lively topic for a year now and it does not appear as though it is going away any time soon! The transition to a new HR director and apparent directions from the school board has rekindled the whole debate. I want to point out that the leave is, indeed, discretionary and the district can say no. In the past Code 8s were pretty much routinely approved. In discussions with HR Director McDonald, she indicated that in the future Code 8s would never be approved if the request was for *vacation leave*. Instead appropriate requests for Code 8s should be for what I will call landmark events. Such landmark events would be things such as important anniversaries such as 10, 20, 30 years, out of state weddings for a child, graduations or awards to a family member, winning a free trip etc. You need to ask yourself a few questions before you write up your Code 8 request. Can you describe your activities when you are off of work differently? Is this an expense-paid opportunity? Is it a cultural-enrichment opportunity for yourself or your family? Is an award being given to a family member? Is this an opportunity that will not repeat itself for the foreseeable future?