**Sauk Valley Community College**

**February 26, 2018**

**Action Item 5.5**

**Topic: Board Policy 432.01 Whistleblower – First Reading**

**College Health Metric 8 – The College conducts thoughtful, systematic planning to support future operations. Plans are updated annually or as necessary**

**Presented By: Dr. David Hellmich and Melissa Dye**

**Presentation:**

As part of the Illinois Grant Accountability and Transparency Act, the College is required to complete a risk assessment questionnaire. Based on information collected, the College was notified that there was a need for a fraud awareness program including information on how to report fraud, waste, and abuse without fear of retaliation. The attached Whistleblower Policy was created to fill this need.

**Recommendation:**

The administration recommends the Board approve the establishment of Board Policy 432.01 Whistleblower as presented for a first reading.

432.01 Whistleblower

1. Philosophy: Sauk Valley Community College is committed to the highest ethical standards and conducts its operations in compliance with federal and state laws and regulations. As such, the College encourages employees to report allegations of internal wrongdoing and provides assurance they will be protected from retaliation for such reporting in good faith.
2. Definition: Wrongdoing may include, but is not limited to, the following: crimes or violations of the law or governmental regulations; fraud or financial irregularity; improper use of College funds, property, or assets; corruption, bribery, or blackmail; and harming College property.
3. Response: The College will promptly investigate reports of possible fraudulent or dishonest use or misuse of College resources made under this policy. Appropriate action will be taken against anyone found to have engaged in fraudulent or dishonest conduct, including disciplinary action by the College, and/or civil and criminal prosecution when warranted.
4. Reporting:
   1. Concerns about possible fraudulent or dishonest use or misuse of resources should be made in writing via a form in FAST, which will be forwarded to the President, the Chair of the Board of Trustees, or the Director of Human Resources. Sufficient information should be provided so that an investigation can be conducted. Concerns may be submitted on a confidential anonymous basis, if the person so desires, but that doing so does not obligate the College to investigate the alleged misconduct (See Anonymous Submissions below).
   2. The Whistleblower Hotline is an alternate reporting process. The number of 835-835-6444 has been established and may be used to report concerns about possible fraudulent or dishonest use or misuse of resources. The Whistleblower Hotline is not an alternative grievance process intended to resolve a personal/personnel injustice.
   3. Employees reporting suspected improper activities on the Whistleblower Hotline are encouraged to identify themselves so the College may contact them for further information if necessary. Reports may be made anonymously if the employee feels that it is the only way he or she can disclose the information safely (See Anonymous Submissions below).
5. Anonymous Submissions: The College encourages those submitting concerns to put their names to allegations because appropriate follow-up questions and investigation may not be possible unless the source of the information is identified. Anonymous whistleblowers must provide sufficient corroborating evidence to justify the commencement of an investigation. An investigation of unspecified wrongdoing or broad allegations will not be undertaken without verifiable evidentiary support. Because investigators are unable to interview anonymous whistleblowers, it may be more difficult to evaluate the credibility of the allegations and, therefore, less likely to cause an investigation to be initiated.
6. Confidentiality: Reports and investigations will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by the circumstances and the law. In general, whistleblower complaints will only be shared with those who have a need to know so that the College can conduct an effective investigation, determine what action to take based on the results of any such investigation, and, in appropriate cases, contact law enforcement personnel. Should disciplinary or legal action be taken against a person or persons as a result of a whistleblower complaint, such persons may also have the right to know the identity of the whistleblower.
7. Protection from Retaliation: An employee who in good faith reports a suspected violation of law or College policy shall not suffer harassment, retaliation, or adverse employment consequence from other employees or the College. An employee who retaliates against someone who has reported a suspected violation in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment. Whistleblowers who believe they have been retaliated against may file a written complaint with the Director of Human Resources or the College President. Any complaint of retaliation will be promptly investigated and appropriate corrective measures taken if allegations of retaliation are substantiated.
8. Acting in Good Faith: Anyone filing a complaint concerning a violation or suspected violation must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation. This policy is not intended and should not be used for personal grievances. Allegations that prove to have been made maliciously or knowingly to be false will be viewed as a serious offense subject to discipline up to and including dismissal from employment.