



Republic of the Philippines
Office of the President
COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

PRESS RELEASE

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CHED Chief: Reports on budget cut for Free Higher Education misleading

Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Officer-in-Charge Dr. J. Prospero E. De Vera III belies claims of some media agencies on alleged massive cuts in the 2019 budget allocation for Free Higher Education.

Dr. De Vera clarified that there is no reduction of budget for the implementation of Republic Act 10931 or the “Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act” for Academic Year (AY) 2019-2020.

“The Duterte administration approved PhP40 billion for RA 10931 for AY 2018-2019. The proposed 2019 National Expenditure Program (NEP) will add an additional PhP11 billion for the Free Higher Education program. The increased funding will allow the CHED and the Unified Financial Assistance System for Tertiary Education (UniFAST) to continue to provide free tuition, miscellaneous and other school-related fees to students in 112 State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) and 78 CHED-recognized Local Universities and Colleges (LUCs). This will also be used in the implementation of the Tertiary Education Subsidy (TES) and National Student Loan Program (NSLP),” De Vera said.

The PhP7 billion budget for Free Technical-Vocational Education and Training (TVET) will directly be given to the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) in 2019.

President Rodrigo Roa Duterte’s support for Free Higher Education is rock solid since 2017 and will continue in 2019. In 2017, PhP8 billion was realigned to CHED for the implementation of the Free Tuition in 112 SUCs and close to 900,00 students did not pay their tuition fees starting June 2017. This number is expected to increase starting June 2018 to approximately 1.3 million students with the implementation of RA 10931.

The additional budget for RA 10931 in the proposed 2019 NEP will allow CHED to reimburse tuition and miscellaneous fees of incoming freshmen starting June 2019 and increase the number of beneficiaries of the Tertiary Education Subsidy (TES), which provides additional stipends for students’ books, transportation and other expenses.

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