



**Statement on the temporary suspension of application for CHED
Merit Scholarship Program
22 May 2020**

This is to clarify what has appeared in the media after my presentation in the Senate Committee of the Whole hearing yesterday, 21 May 2020.

The media reports gave the impression that all Commission on Higher Education (CHED) scholarship programs are being cut due to the implementation of National Budget Circular (NBC) No. 580 by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM).

CHED will temporarily suspend the application of the CHED Merit Scholarship Program (CMSP) which has 2,467 new slots for incoming freshman college students for Academic Year 2020-2021.

This is to urgently support and contribute to the government's efforts in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and to prioritize need-based scholarships rather than merit-based scholarships.

With the available funding, we can only cover existing scholars to ensure their continuous education during these difficult times. This temporary suspension is intended to financially support national programs for financially vulnerable families affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The CHED Merit Scholarship is a yearly competitive scholarship given to students based on their grades the previous school year. The Full Merit and Half Merit scholarships are open to all student applicants and the money is used for paying tuition, miscellaneous fees and other education expenses of students.

The CMSP is not the same as the grant programs under the Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education (UAQTE) Law or Republic Act No. 10931. The budget for the reimbursement of tuition and miscellaneous fees in state universities and colleges (SUCs) and local universities and colleges (LUCs), Tertiary Education Subsidy (TES), and Student Loan Program (SLP) were not affected by the implementation of NBC 580 and thus remain intact so students will continue to receive their TES. There are more than 300,000 beneficiaries for the academic year 2020-2021 under the TES.



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