

Agreement on free higher education signed

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The Commission on Higher Education (CHED), 112 state universities and colleges and 78 local universities yesterday signed an agreement implementing the Free Higher Education Law. President Duterte witnessed the signing of the agreement, which is expected to benefit more than one million students.

“Beyond access to quality education, this legislation you signed will be the greatest investment for the future because it will produce a highly educated, better trained and more employable workforce that will propel the country’s development in the future,” CHED officer-in-charge Prospero de Vera III told Duterte during the signing ceremony at Malacañang.

“This commitment will finally make the lifelong aspirations of Filipino students a reality,” de Vera added.

More than 800,000 students did not pay tuition in June last year because of Duterte’s approval of the proposal to realign P8 billion in the budget of CHED. Close to 1.3 million students no longer need to pay tuition and miscellaneous fees this school year.

“In addition, 300,000 of 1.3 million students will be given additional subsidy by government,” De Vera said, adding that the beneficiaries are poor students who are covered by the social welfare department’s cash transfer program.

Duterte urged government officials, local educational institutions and educators to do their best to ensure the efficient implementation of the Free Higher Education Law.

“At present, millions of Filipino youth are still having a hard time finishing their studies due to poverty. Many poor students are struggling to go to school simply because they have no money for allowance, transportation, books and projects and other miscellaneous expenses,” the President said.