THE PHILIPPINE STAR
metro

THURSDAY | MARCH 15, 2018

13

CHED releases IRR for free higher education law

The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) yesterday released the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of the free higher education law, paving the way for the program's full implementation in the upcoming school year.

Explaining the delay in the release of the IRR, CHED officer-in-charge J. Prospero de Vera III said there were extensive discussions on various provisions of the law during deliberations of the Unified Student Financial Assistance System for Tertiary Education (UniFAST) Board.

"One has to understand that this is not an easy law to write into an IRR because we have no template. This is the first time in a developing country where we will attempt to make public education free for everyone," De Vera said, who co-chairs the UniFAST Board.

"On the part of UniFAST, we have to balance our desire to expedite the writing of the IRR with our duty to protect public funds," he added.

De Vera cited issues concerning definition of miscellaneous fees covered by Republic Act 10931 or the Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act of 2017, noting that different schools charge different types of fees.

"We have to be very clear in defining what is covered under these miscellaneous fees. We cannot just let the (state universities and colleges) submit their collections and we reimburse all of them. We have to define each one, we have to standardize them," De Vera said.

Covered fees include library, computer, laboratory, school ID, athletic, admission, development (including student publication), guidance, handbook, entrance, registration, medical and dental, and cultural expenses.

Entrance examination fees in qualified higher education institutions will also be waived starting this year. – **Janvic Mateo**

* COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION (CHED)
* IMPLEMENTING RULES & REGULATION (IRR)