

By DEXTER YAP

In two separate meetings, Congressman Celso Lobregat yesterday met with student beneficiaries who will continue to avail of the approximately P5.1 million Educational Assistance thru the “Tulong Dunong Program”.

The first orientation was held at 9 o'clock in the morning yesterday at the Zamboanga City State Polytechnic College (ZCSPC) with students from WMSU and ZCSPC. The second orientation was at 1:30pm at the Zamboanga State College of Marine Sciences and Technology (ZSCMST) for students of Ateneo de Zamboanga University (ADZU), Southern City Colleges (SCC) and ZSCMST as well.

Covered by the existing Tulong Dunong Program under the 1st Congressional District are 691 students with 324 student beneficiaries from WMSU, 81 from ZSCMST, 126 from ZCSPC, 105 from ADZU and 55 from SCC.

Congressman Lobregat assured the student-beneficiaries under the existing “Tulong Dunong Program” that they will continue to receive the educational assistance as long as he is the Congressman as he committed to allocate funds in the district budget for this purpose.

Under the existing program, student beneficiaries from State Colleges and Universities (SUC's) received an educational assistance of Php3,000 per semester or Php6,000 per school year.

Lobregat clarified that since the free tuition policy for SUC's is in effect for School-Year 2017-2018, the education assistance for student beneficiaries from SUC's use to pay for miscellaneous and other fees and allowances.

On the other hand, the educational assistance for student beneficiaries under the existing Tulong Dunong Program for private colleges and universities is Php6,000 per semester or Php12,000 per school year. This will be used to pay for tuition fees and student beneficiaries of

ADZU and SCC.

Commission on Higher Education(CHED) Regional Office IX representative Dr. Teresita Pinili also conducted the orientation on the school guidelines for the educational assistance and scholarship program. Also present during the event were city councilors Bong Atilano, Myra Paz Valderrosa-Abubakar, Rudy Lim, and BG Guingona.

Lobregat also invited some barangay officials of District 1 where the student beneficiary lives, so that they would be also informed of the number of listing of the student-beneficiaries from the different barangays.

The solon also advised the barangay officials of student beneficiaries that the program under District 1 is intended to help students of their families that come from Zamboanga City, and to put this policy in effect. One of the requirements for a student to avail of the educational assistance under this program is that the student must be a graduate of high school in Zamboanga City. – Dexter Yap