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CHED scraps vaccination requirement for students joining face-to-face classes

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This comes after the Public Attorney's Office called on CHED to withdraw its directives that allow colleges and universities to prevent unvaccinated students from attending in-person classes

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MANILA, Philippines – The Commission on Higher Education announced on Monday, August 29, that it was removing the vaccination requirements for students and teachers joining the implementation of face-to-face classes.

“Students and HEI (higher education institution) personnel, regardless of vaccination status, can participate in face-to-face classes. That’s the most significant change in policy,” CHED Chairman Prospero de Vera III said in a press briefing.

This development came after the Public Attorney’s Office called on CHED to withdraw its directives that allow colleges and universities to prevent unvaccinated students from attending face-to-face classes.

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It can be recalled that in December 2021, CHED said that only vaccinated students could join in-person classes.

The policy shift is similar to what the Department of Education is implementing for basic education students. Vice President and Education Secretary Sara Duterte said that “there should be no segregation, no discrimination for the unvaccinated learners because vaccination is not mandatory.”

Unlike DepEd, CHED was not mandating the return to face-to-face classes of all college students. Although, De Vera earlier said that CHED was expecting a “significant” number of schools to shift to the traditional mode of learning.

In March 2021, De Vera said that CHED had already adopted a policy that “flexible learning” system will “continue in school year 2021 and thereafter.”

The CHED chair explained that they adopted the policy as they don’t want to “run the risk exposing our educational stakeholders to the same risk if another pandemic comes in.”

Aside from this, De Vera said that going back to the traditional face-to-face classes would waste the “investments in technology, teachers’ training, and retrofitting of our facilities.”

“Flexible learning” for higher education institutions involves a combination of digital and non-digital technology, which CHED said doesn’t necessarily require internet connectivity. (READ: [During pandemic, student climbs a mountain to send class](#))

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