



PR#372-22

PRESS RELEASE

MoECST Signs MOU with FFB and BBF

Belmopan. December 14, 2022.

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Technology (MoECST) today signed individual memorandums of understanding (MOU) with the Football Federation of Belize (FFB) and the Belize Basketball Federation (BBF) at the Government House in Belize City.

The MoECST, through the signing of these memorandums, has committed to supporting student-athletes by providing education stipends to assist with living and tuition expenses. The FFB identified 10 student-athletes studying abroad to receive a BZ\$600 monthly stipend to assist with living expenses, and 39 student-athletes have been identified by the BBF to receive a tuition scholarship up to the baccalaureate level.

In his remarks, Hon. Francis Fonseca, Minister of Education, Culture, Science and Technology, expressed his satisfaction with the work that led up to the signing of the memorandums and called on all parties to work together to create more opportunities for youth in sports. He said that sports can serve as an avenue for youths to express themselves and gain the skills necessary to lead productive and fulfilling lives.

Hon. Rodwell Ferguson, Minister of Youth, Sports and Transport, spoke on the importance of the memorandums and expressed gratitude to the MoECST for supporting the initiative. Presidents of both federations commended the ministry's willingness to support the student-athletes and to take the necessary steps to transform that willingness into concrete results. They highlighted the significant impact that the MOUs and the support they guarantee will have on the lives of the student-athletes.

The memorandums were signed by Mr. Sergio Chuc, President of the Football Federation of Belize, and Mr. Jacob Leslie, President of the Belize

Basketball Federation, and witnessed by the general secretaries of both federations. Mrs. Cecilia Ramirez-Smith, Deputy Chief Education Officer, signed on behalf of the MoECST's chief executive officer, and Dr. Yvonne Palma, Director of the Tertiary Education Unit, signed on behalf of the chief education officer. Recipients, mentors and parents were also present for the signing ceremony.

The ministry recognises the crucial role that the development of sports can play in the transformation of the lives of Belize's youth and is proud to support this initiative.

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