2.3.1 Beliefs about Student Success

What students believe about themselves and their opportunities, and what their peers and the adults in their lives believe about them, significantly influence the choices students make and the degree to which they achieve their goals. The education and career/life planning program policy for Ontario schools is based on three core beliefs, namely, that:

- all students can be successful;
- success comes in many forms;
- there are many pathways to success.

2.3.2 The Importance of a Comprehensive Education and Career/Life Planning Program

In this document, the term comprehensive is used to describe the education and career/life planning program envisioned for all publicly funded Ontario schools. A comprehensive program creates an engaging education and career/life planning culture within the school that supports the achievement of the program goals.

A comprehensive education and career/life planning program is:

- **knowledge- and skills-based**: Program-related learning activities focus on helping students acquire knowledge and skills in education and career/life planning.
- **inquiry-based**: Program-related learning is structured around the four questions of the education and career/life planning inquiry process (Who am I? What are my opportunities? Who do I want to become? What is my plan for achieving my goals?) (see Chapter 3).
- **developmentally appropriate**: Teaching and learning activities are appropriate to the interests, strengths, needs, and aspirations of students at every stage of development.
- **holistic**: Programming takes the whole student into account, recognizing that, for every student, success is influenced by many factors (e.g., cognitive, emotional, social, physical).
- **transformational**: The program moves beyond the transmission of information to focus on helping students grow and reach their potential.
- **inclusive**: The program is designed to engage all students, consistent with Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles.\(^4\)
- **differentiated**: Teaching and learning activities are personalized to meet students’ particular learning and motivational needs.\(^5\)

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\(^4\) UDL and differentiated instruction are discussed in Ontario curriculum policy documents for all subjects and disciplines (see the section “Considerations for Program Planning”) and in *Learning for All: A Guide to Effective Assessment and Instruction for All Students, Kindergarten to Grade 12*.

\(^5\) See note 4, above.
• **varied in its methods of delivery**: The program employs a wide range of delivery methods in the context of curriculum-related activities and programs, school-wide activities, and activities in the community (see Chapter 5).

• **deeply embedded or “infused”**: School and community stakeholders work collaboratively to embed education and career/life planning across all subjects, courses, and daily learning activities.

• **based on a whole-school approach**: School staff, students, parents, and the community are involved in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the program.

• **well-documented**: Information about the program is shared on an ongoing basis, in written form, with parents and other stakeholders (see Chapter 6).

• **accountable**: Program goals are included in school board⁶ and school improvement plans (e.g., the Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement [BIPSA], the School Improvement Plan for Student Achievement [SIPSA]), and are related to the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF).

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⁶ The terms school board and board are used in this document to refer to district school boards and to those school authorities that offer elementary and/or secondary school programs.