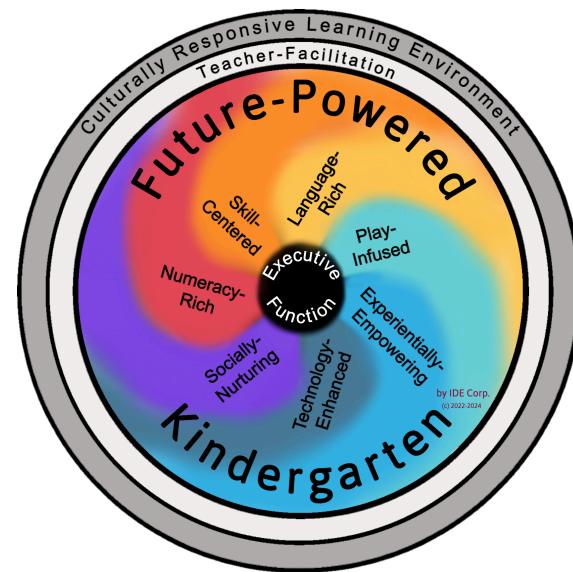# Future-Powered Kindergarten: What It Looks Like

- Building Executive Function All Day Long:
  - Students making decisions via choice boards for activities
  - Students negotiating their way during play and collaborative work
  - Students developing solutions to problems and challenges
  - Students engaged in communication with others throughout the day
  - Students using technology for increased access to learning opportunities

- Shifting the Role of the Teacher:
  - Teachers curate and create differentiated opportunities to learn and guide students in their choices
  - Teachers observe students in action, gather formative assessment data, and lean in with questions and instruction
  - Teachers create the pathways and guardrails to make students responsible for their own learning
  - Teachers track students' academic progress; executive function skill building; and social, emotional, and mental wellness

Component	What It Looks Like	What the Teacher Does
Language-Rich	• Students read, write, talk, and listen throughout the day, regardless of activity. • Students hear adults talking with them in small groups, one-on-one, and in whole-group meetings. • Students talk to one another. • Items are labeled throughout the classroom. • Students learn four levels of vocabulary: operational, social, academic, domain-specific. • Students engage in explicit instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.	• Posts appropriate anchor charts throughout the room • Labels items throughout the classroom • Works with students to maintain a Word Wall • Creates opportunities for students to use language to work together • Facilitates with deliberate references to language skills and levels of vocabulary • Tracks individuals' mastery of literacy skills • Provides explicit instruction through small-group and one-on-one lessons and video lessons

Component	What It Looks Like	What the Teacher Does
Numeracy-Rich	● Students refer to the mathematical perspective of whatever they're doing throughout the day. ● The walls are filled with references to number sense, geometry, charts, and other related math concepts. ● During teacher read-alouds, the teacher poses literacy questions about the book *and* about the mathematical concepts in play. ● Students engage in explicit instruction in number sense, operations, geometry, and measurement.	● Posts appropriate anchor charts throughout the room ● Makes deliberate references to mathematical concepts and skills as students are engaged in activities ● Tracks individuals' mastery of numeracy skills ● Observes students working with math manipulatives, gathers formative assessment data, and asks questions to push thinking ● Provides explicit instruction through small-group and one-on-one lessons and video lessons
Play-Infused	● Students engage in purposeful, joyful play that supports cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development. ● Play is varied and dynamic — ranging from imaginative role-play to construction, movement, storytelling, and problem solving. ● Students use play to make sense of the world, try on new ideas, and express their thinking in creative ways. ● Both structured and unstructured play opportunities are woven throughout the day. ● Students initiate games, negotiate rules, and adapt play to include others. ● Play is recognized as a legitimate and valued form of learning — not a break from it.	● Designs a classroom environment rich in open-ended materials that spark creativity, exploration, and interaction ● Observes play closely to understand students' thinking, development, and emerging interests ● Intervenes strategically in play to extend language, scaffold social interactions, and introduce new ideas ● Builds daily routines that prioritize time for play — indoors and outdoors, structured and free ● Integrates academic concepts into play contexts without disrupting the flow of student-led discovery ● Advocates for play as essential to learning, communicating its value to families and colleagues ● Uses documentation of play to reflect on student growth and inform instructional decisions
Skill-Centered	● Students track progress in building life skills (e.g., zipping a jacket, tying shoes, saying *please* and *thank you*, etc.). ● Students track progress in building executive function skills. ● Students track progress in building academic skills.	● Develops student-appropriate tracking sheets for skills ● Develops related content facilitation grids for teacher tracking of individual student progress ● Seeks out opportunities to reinforce skills throughout all activities

Component	What It Looks Like	What the Teacher Does
Socially-Nurturing	- Students feel seen, heard, and affirmed for who they are — their identities, efforts, and accomplishments are celebrated. - Students engage in authentic conversations, collaborate on shared tasks, and practice navigating social dynamics with guidance and reflection. - Students are encouraged to express emotions, needs, and preferences using respectful language and are coached in doing so. - Disagreements are seen as learning opportunities, with students supported in problem solving and conflict resolution. - Classroom routines and rituals foster a sense of belonging, predictability, and community. - Acts of kindness, inclusion, and empathy are modeled, encouraged, and acknowledged.	- Builds strong, trusting relationships with each student through daily, intentional interactions - Models empathy, respect, and inclusive language in every conversation - Facilitates community-building routines such as morning meetings, partner greetings, and shared celebrations - Coaches students through conflict resolution using language that validates feelings and guides constructive problem solving - Reinforces social-emotional vocabulary (e.g., "I feel . . . ," "I need . . . ," "I noticed . . .") to help students express themselves effectively - Observes peer interactions to proactively support social development and intervenes with care when needed - Designs collaborative tasks that require sharing, turn-taking, listening, and negotiation - Acknowledges and celebrates student growth in kindness, cooperation, and emotional regulation
Experientially-Empowering	- Students learn by engaging in hands-on, meaningful, real-world challenges and learning experiences that spark curiosity and deepen understanding. - Students make choices throughout the day — selecting materials, shaping their learning paths, and contributing ideas. - Students take initiative in classroom routines, problem solving, and project-based experiences. - Students explore concepts through play, experimentation, construction, inquiry, and discovery. - Students reflect on what they are learning and how they are learning it, building a sense of ownership and agency. - Students see their ideas and efforts lead to real outcomes within the classroom community.	- Designs learning environments where materials, centers, and tools are accessible, and encourages exploration - Offers open-ended tasks that invite creativity, inquiry, and student decision making - Creates opportunities for students to lead parts of the day (e.g., helpers, idea generators, classroom problem-solvers) - Scaffolds student choices with intentional language and reflection to build confidence and self-direction - Listens and responds to student ideas, allowing them to shape learning experiences in authentic ways - Uses observation and dialogue to support students in connecting their experiences to broader concepts - Encourages metacognition by asking students to reflect on their processes, choices, and discoveries

Component	What It Looks Like	What the Teacher Does
Technology-Enhanced	- Students use age-appropriate technology tools to create, explore, document, and share their learning. - Technology supports communication — students record voices, take photos, or draw digitally to express ideas and stories. - Students engage with interactive digital resources that reinforce foundational skills through play and exploration. - Students navigate technology with increasing independence and purpose, supported by guided routines. - Technology is integrated naturally into learning centers and activities as one of many tools available. - Digital tools extend access and equity — helping all students participate, regardless of language or ability.	- Curates developmentally appropriate digital tools that align with learning goals and enhance hands-on experiences - Models responsible, purposeful technology use, treating tech as a tool for thinking, not just entertainment - Guides students in using technology to document their work, communicate with others, and reflect on their progress - Incorporates multimedia learning experiences (e.g., digital stories, virtual field trips, video modeling) to enrich instruction - Builds routines and expectations that support safe, respectful, and effective use of devices - Uses technology to capture and assess student learning over time, including photos, voice recordings, and video - Ensures all students have equitable access to devices and digital experiences, adjusting for individual needs