



*From left to right: CUE graduate Jeremy Alvarez, CUE graduate Ashley Crowe, CUE graduate Jennifer Ruiz, Maxwell Elementary Principal Nivan Khosravi, CUE graduate Stephanie Gonzalez, CUE teacher candidate Jazmín Ubaldo, and CUE teacher candidate Maria Salas*

## **Partner School Maxwell Elementary Attracts CUE Teacher**

[Maxwell Elementary](#) is a [Denver Public School](#) that develops “students’ independence, critical thought, and enduring love for learning” in partnership with parents. Three [UNC Center for Urban Education](#) (CUE) students currently work as paraprofessionals at Maxwell, and four CUE graduates work there as teachers. It’s unusual to have so many of our CUE students and graduates working at one school, so we decided to investigate the dynamics at this particular partner school.



*CUE Graduate Jeremy Alvarez and his classroom at Maxwell Elementary*

## **Fully Inclusive SPED Program**

CUE graduate Jeremy Alvarez works at Maxwell as a 3rd/5th grade special education (SPED) teacher. When we asked him what attracted him to working at Maxwell, he said, “Maxwell runs a fully inclusive SPED program, meaning it provides all SPED services in the general education setting, with a strong focus on integrated co-teaching. That’s what drew me to Maxwell and what has kept me here.”

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Alvarez believes all children should be taught in the general education setting to the greatest extent possible. Thanks to the inclusive environment at Maxwell, Alvarez said the students have a deep understanding of equity versus equality.

Alvarez also said that he’s always felt supported at Maxwell. “Because I’m in a graduate program on top of being in a profession where there is always a long to-do list, I sometimes feel like I am awful at my job,” said Alvarez. “But everyone at the school—my coach, my co-teachers, and the administrators—understand. They give me, and each other, grace.”

When we asked him how he felt the program at the Center for Urban Education had prepared him for teaching in an urban school, Alvarez said, “Learning how to teach in an elementary assessment.” He said that working as a paraprofessional while earning his undergraduate

## **Rigorous Hiring Process**

Nivan Khosravi worked for six years as a teacher before becoming the principal at Maxwell Elementary, where he has been proudly serving students for 10 years. When we asked him about the numerous CUE students and graduates who work at his school, he said, "We have a rigorous hiring process, and the CUE students and graduates met those requirements. We look for a growth mindset. Candidates must demonstrate that they focus on equity and carry that value in their heart."

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"We hire folks who want to serve in our community, serve our students, and connect with



