

A peek into the classroom: the inner workings of a high school physics community

As physicists, we know that light travels faster than sound, but not through walls. Before you walk into my classroom, you'll hear a mixture of laughter, questioning, and equipment clanking. Upon entering the room, you'll see a group of budding young physicists, eagerly working together to reach a common goal. If I could describe my classroom with one word, it would be community. This community is the product of my learnings from my first physics community: the physics teacher preparation program at Rutgers University. Years ago, I was in the shoes of my students and experiencing physics in this context with my cohort and professors. Now, as a high school teacher, I want my students to experience the same level of camaraderie and support from their peers. In this talk, I am going to share how learning physics in an accepting environment has helped my students step outside their comfort zones and discover who they are as learners.