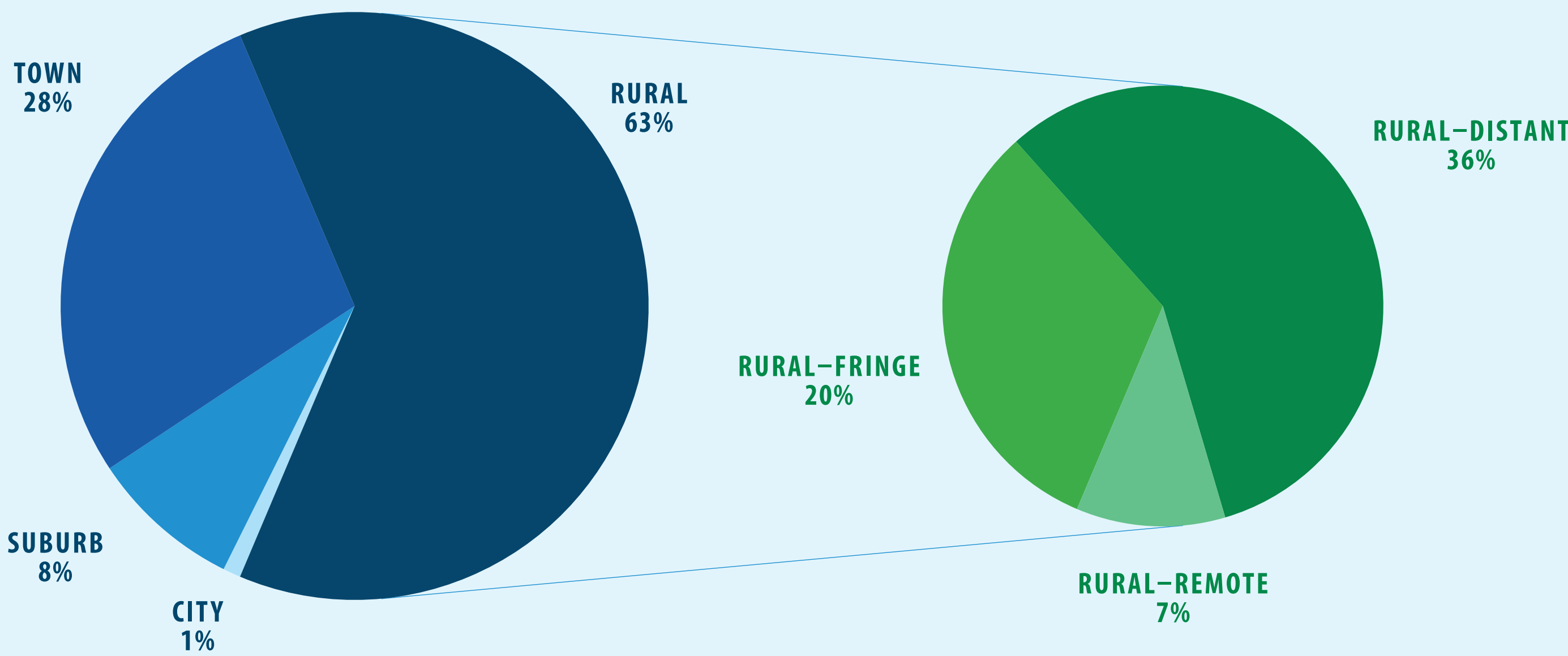


COLLEGE ENROLLMENT AND PERSISTENCE IN RURAL PENNSYLVANIA SCHOOLS

Understanding college enrollment and persistence rates in rural schools is one of the main goals of the Rural College Readiness Research Alliance of REL Mid-Atlantic. Working with the Pennsylvania Association of Rural and Small Schools, the Research Alliance examined how college enrollment and persistence among graduates of Pennsylvania’s rural schools compare with rates for graduates of city, suburban, and town high schools.

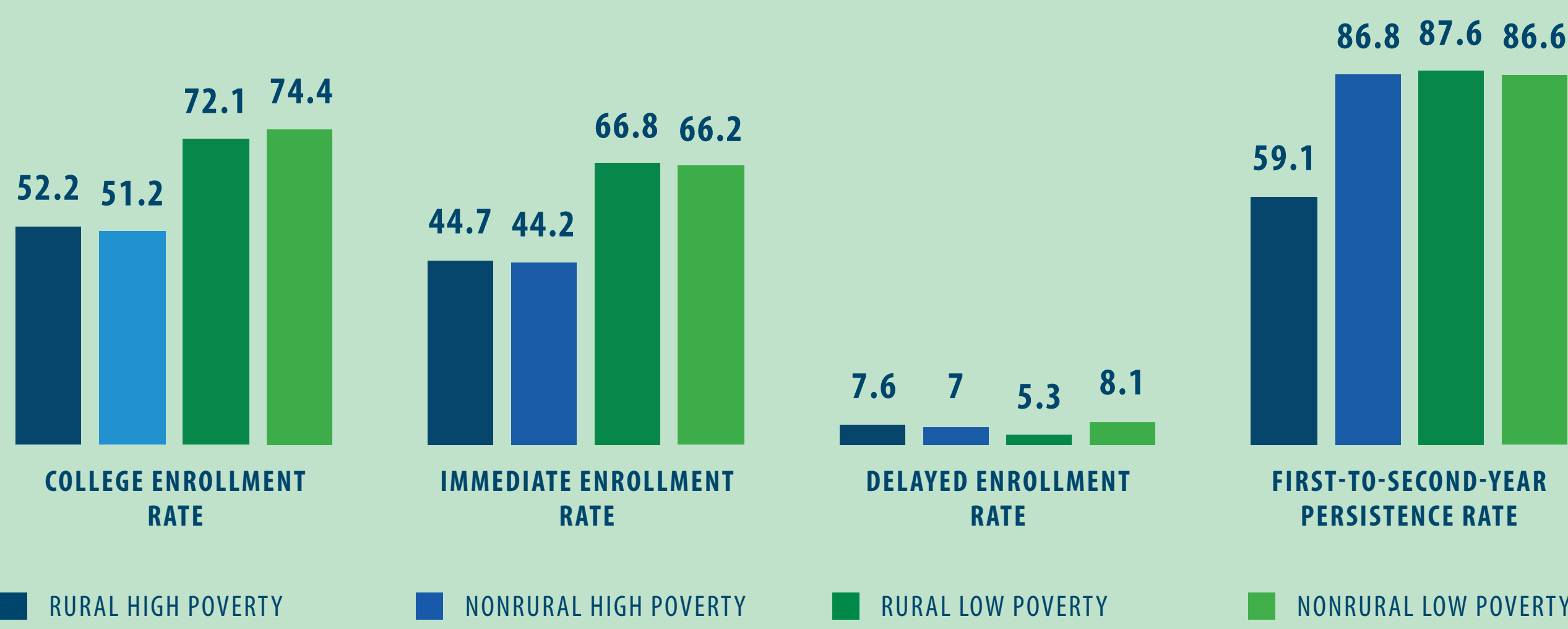


STUDY SAMPLE: PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS IN PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION OF RURAL AND SMALL SCHOOLS DISTRICTS, BY LOCALE, 2010/11



The findings suggest that in Pennsylvania, the relative poverty of rural areas, rather than a rural location itself, may compromise college enrollment and persistence.

COLLEGE ENROLLMENT AND FIRST-TO-SECOND-YEAR PERSISTENCE RATES OF PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION OF RURAL AND SMALL SCHOOLS DISTRICTS, BY SCHOOL LOCALE AND POVERTY CATEGORY, 2010/11 COHORT



- Level of poverty – not location – seems to be more strongly related to college enrollment rate and immediate college enrollment rate.
- Rural location and level of poverty were not strongly related to delayed enrollment.
- Rural, high-poverty students had the lowest first-to-second-year persistence rate.

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:

- Examine factors associated with persistence, such as high school course-taking patterns, high school grade point averages, achievement scores, and college credit accumulation patterns.
- Explore how proximity to cities, suburbs, or towns may offer students from rural–fringe schools access to resources and supports that are less available in rural–distant and rural–remote schools.
- Identify evidence-based college access and success strategies that target economically disadvantaged youth who attend rural schools that serve a large population of these students.

The information in this infographic can be found in the full report: Howley, C., Johnson, J., Passa, A., & Uekawa, K. (2014). *College enrollment and persistence in rural Pennsylvania schools*. (REL 2015–053). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Mid-Atlantic. Retrieved from <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/projects/project.asp?ProjectID=370>.