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.

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

**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.