

THE HEARTBREAK OF BEING A CMS ACADEMIC GROWTH STUDENT

An eye-opening view of the disparity separating two Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

Grade Level Proficiency and Career & College diploma endorsements in the last eight years at West Charlotte, Harding, and Garinger have been beyond poor. For this report, West Charlotte's lackluster performance will be representative of CMS's inability to pull up urban students. West Charlotte students averaged only two (2) Career endorsements a year for the last five school years. That's discouraging for urban students who the district led to believe there was a future in their future. The charts and data tables in this report show few bright spots. Results from the last eight years dim my optimism for an explosion anytime soon of urban student achievement and opportunity.

THE STORY

Suburban Ardrey Kell is the district's standard for English II Proficient Levels. When comparing urban West Charlotte to Ardrey; it was never better than fifty percent (50%) of Ardrey Kell's attainment and in most cases significantly lower. West Charlotte students got their slow starts in CMS's urban elementary and middle school feeders where academic achievement is routinely measured by Growth; not Proficiency. For example, the West Charlotte feeder Bruns Elementary State Report Card performance grade was "F" every year from 2014; Thomasboro K-8 feeder six "D's" and one "F." Urban kids are not being prepared for greatness. F,F,F,F,F,F,F is a management problem; not the students, not the families.

Proponents of measuring K-8 academic achievement with Growth instead of Proficiency insist students will eventually thrive, maybe even getting close to being as proficient as their crosstown peers by graduation. No! Since 2014-2015 school year, this has not happened at West Charlotte. It's the same tale at Harding and Garinger.

THE EVIDENCE – The Charts

These NCDPI English II performance charts are comparisons of a CMS top and bottom-tier traditional high school between 2021-2022 and 2014-2015. Each set illustrates that students who had attended lower grades where growth was the primary goal, were a half lap or more behind their crosstown peers. These urban students are also the ones who exited middle schools less prepared for the transition to 9th grade and were likely to fail to graduate. In Mecklenburg County these children mostly finish (or almost finish) at Harding, West Charlotte, Garinger, Vance, and West Meck.

CMS constantly identifies and supports students not keeping pace. Without that, failure to achieve would be worse. However, the charts are clear. A huge proportion is still not able to cope with high school rigor. How did the identification not convert to better high school years? The kids in these charts completed elementary and middle school before 2019; so, it's not the Pandemic.

It's heartbreaking to see urban students missing all the benefits of CMS' excellent high schools. CMS must be challenged to do better for its urban students before they reach high school. Congratulation to all those Growth students who succeeded...but they were too few.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

These unacceptable results at our urban high schools are rooted in K-8 grades not producing proficient students. There are CMS schools like K-5 Allenbrook Elementary that don't want to be a part of that. They take unprepared students; start them showing Growth but simultaneously let families understand that Proficiency not Growth is the goal...that not being proficient leads to being unemployable for good paying jobs and no college. You can help by telling community leaders that schools that get F's and D's are not wanted here. Challenge principals. Show them these charts. Tell them you want your child; your neighbor's child, to have mastered the skills to make the jump from 8th to 9th grade. That you look forward to the day when Ardrey Kell families are envious of West Charlotte High School.

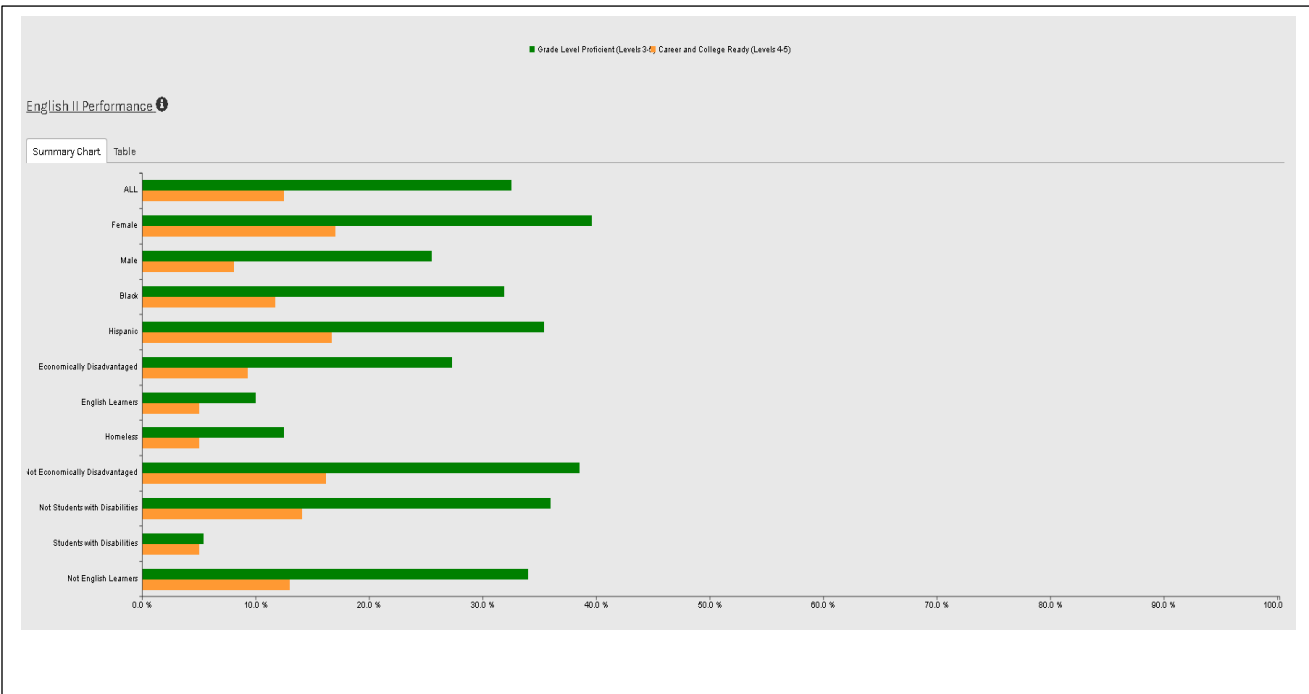
GREEN Bars: Grade Level Proficient (3-5)

Orange Bars: Career and College Ready (4-5)

Ardrey Kell high school 2021-2022



West Charlotte HS 2021-22

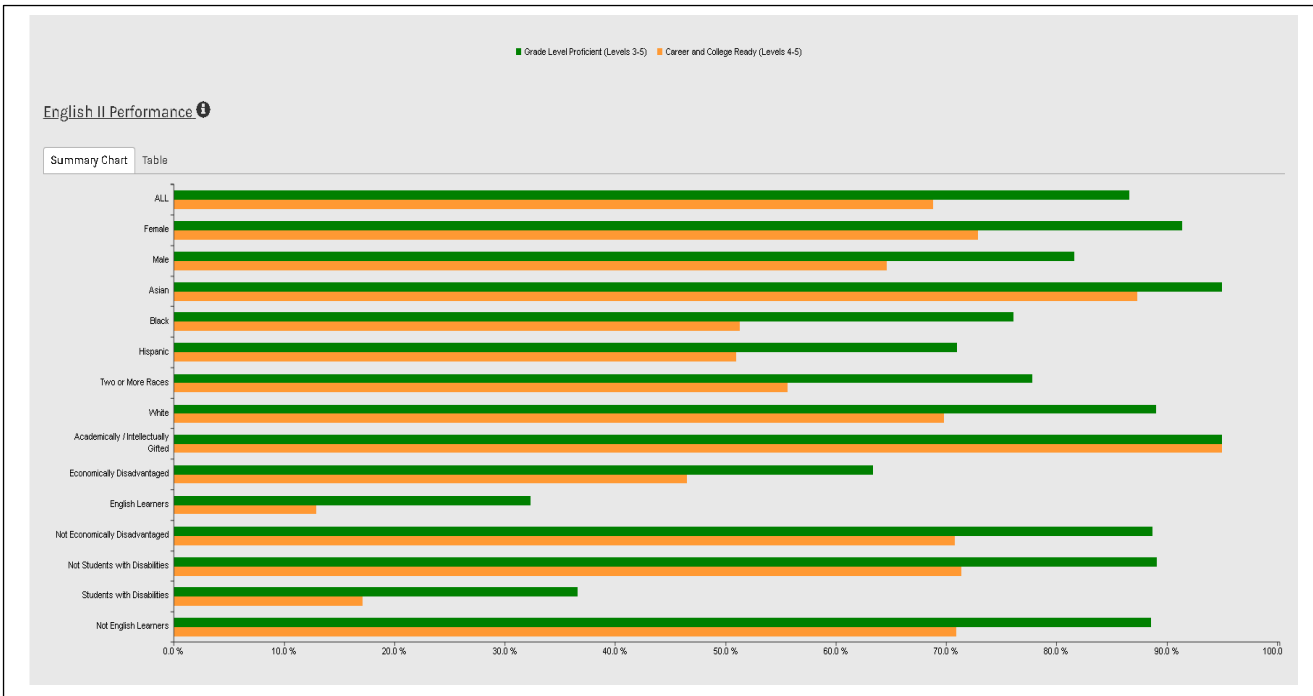


SOURCE: NCDPI STATE REPORT CARDS

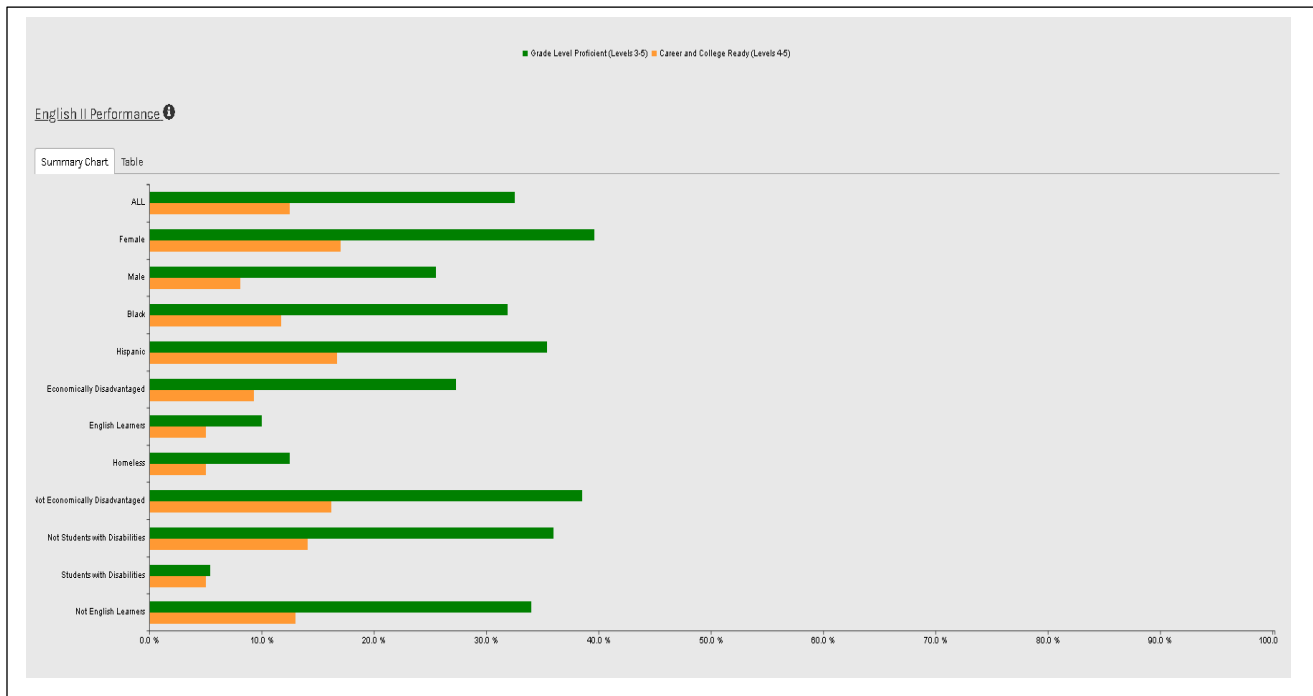
GREEN Bars: Grade Level Proficient (3-5)

Orange Bars: Career and College Ready (4-5)

Ardrey Kell high school 2020-2021



West Charlotte HS 2020-21



SOURCE: NCDPI STATE REPORT CARDS

GREEN Bars: Grade Level Proficient (3-5)

Orange Bars: Career and College Ready (4-5)

Ardrey Kell 2019-2020

Note on missing data: On March 23, 2020, the U.S. Department of Education approved North Carolina's request to waive spring statewide assessments, accountability ratings, and certain reporting requirements in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) for the 2019-2020 school year due to widespread school closures related to the novel Coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

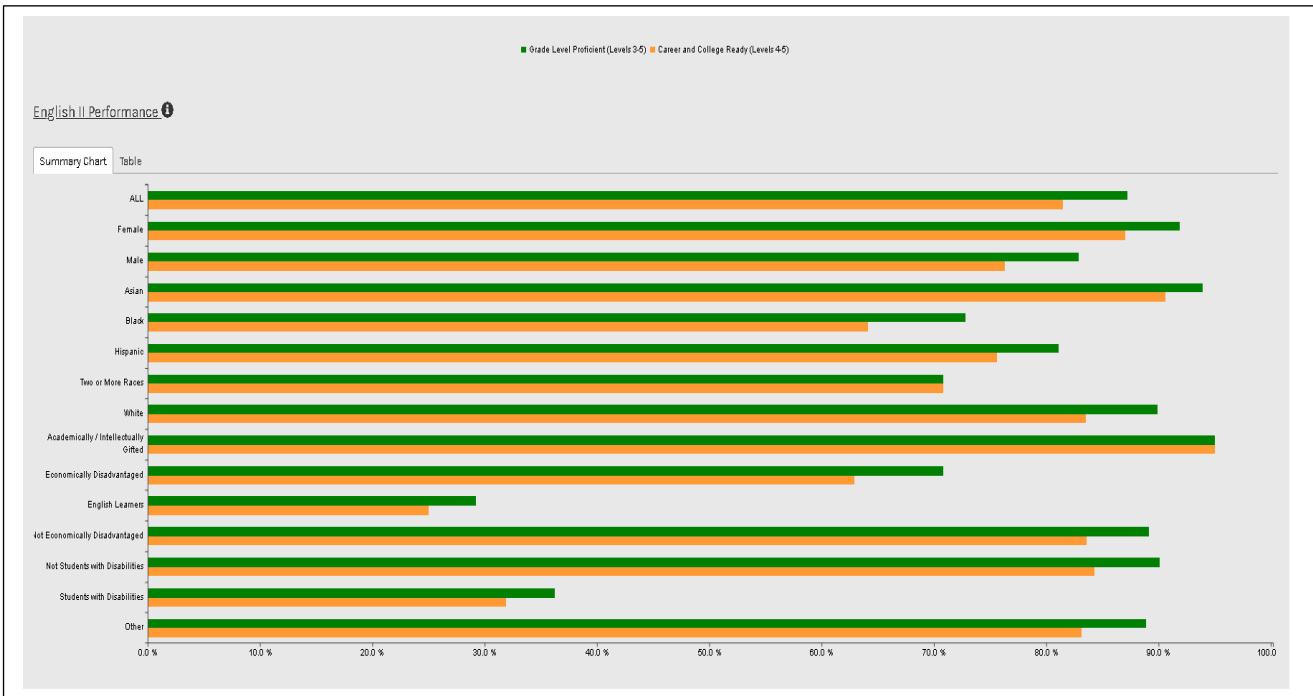
West Charlotte HS 2019-20

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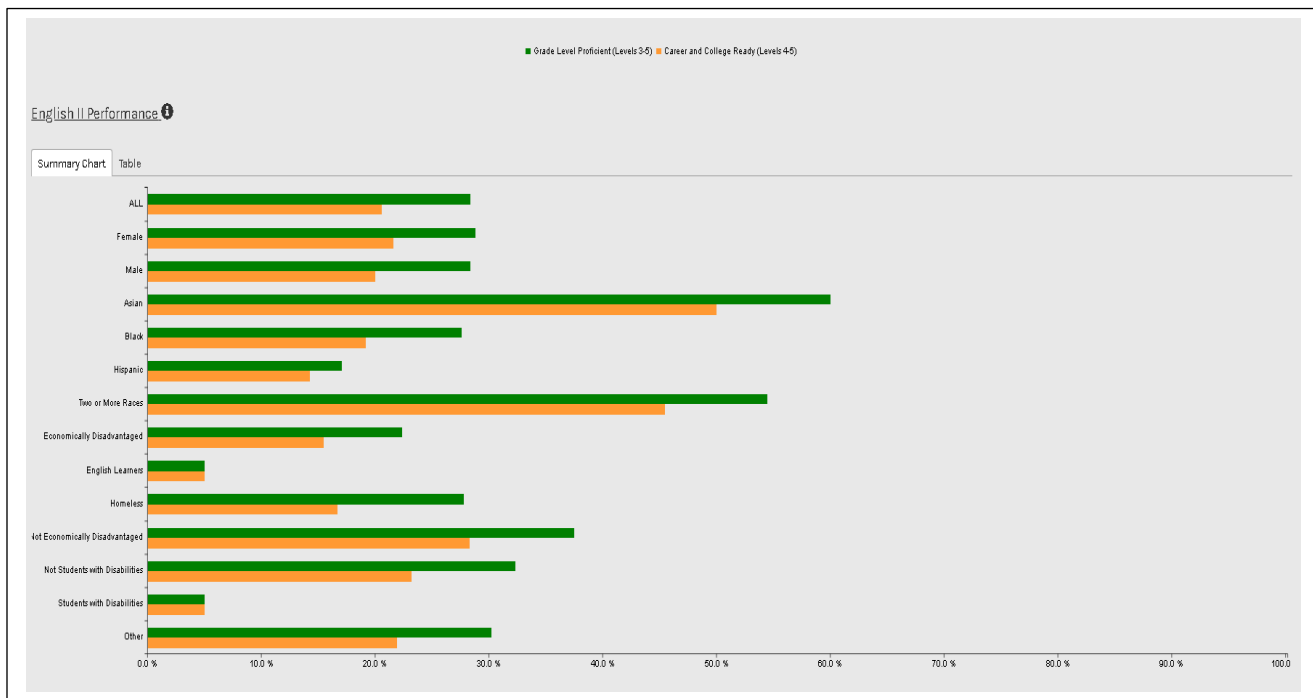
SOURCE: NCDPI STATE REPORT CARDS

GREEN Bars: Grade Level Proficient (3-5)
Orange Bars: Career and College Ready (4-5)

Ardrey Kell high school 2018-2019



West Charlotte HS 2018-2019

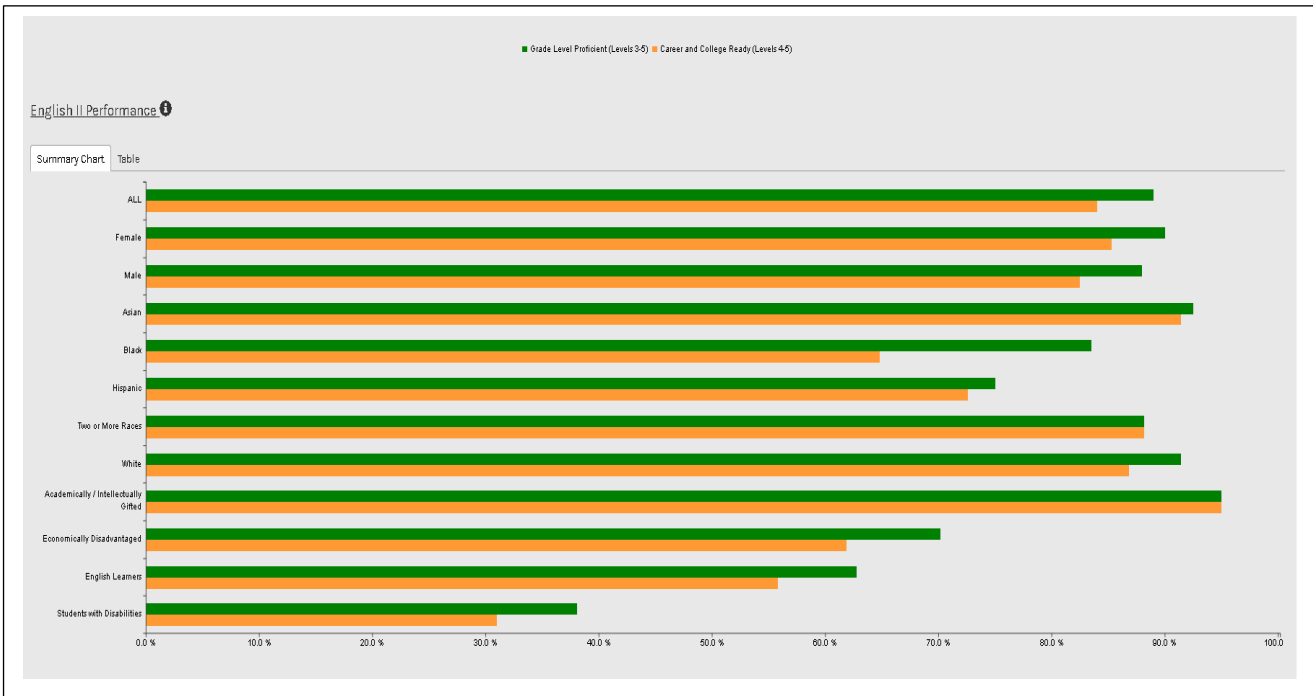


SOURCE: NCDPI STATE REPORT CARDS

GREEN Bars: Grade Level Proficient (3-5)

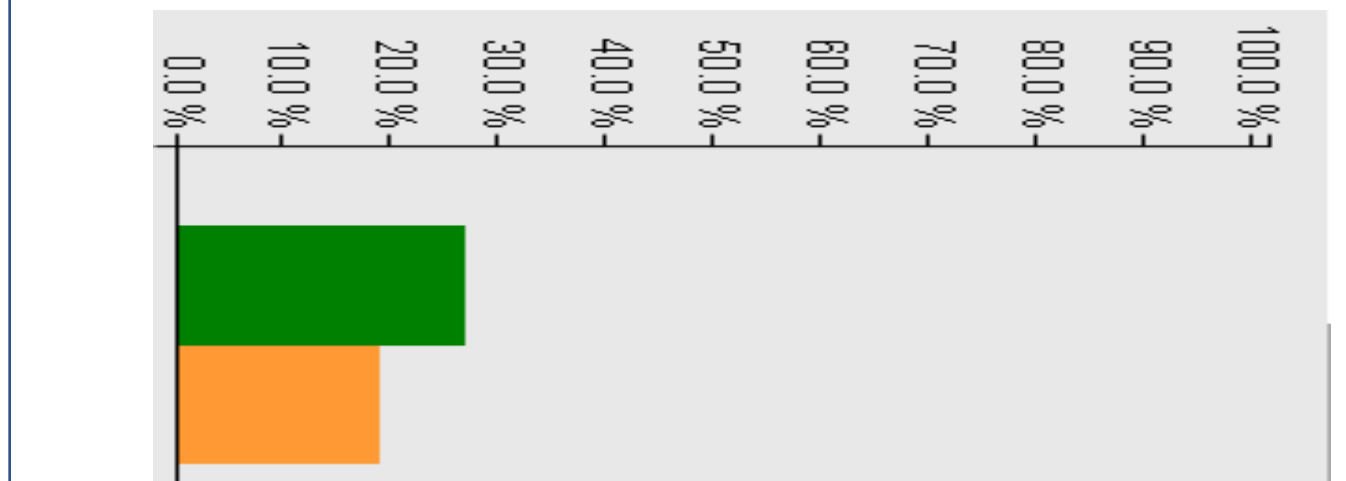
Orange Bars: Career and College Ready (4-5)

Ardrey Kell high school 2017-2018



West Charlotte HS 2017-2018 (subgroups not available)

NCDPI DIDN'T PRODUCE AN ENGLISH II PERFORMANCE CHART BY SUBGROUPS FOR WEST CHARLOTTE. THIS "BY SCHOOL" CHART IS A CUT AND PASTED FROM NCDPI SITE.

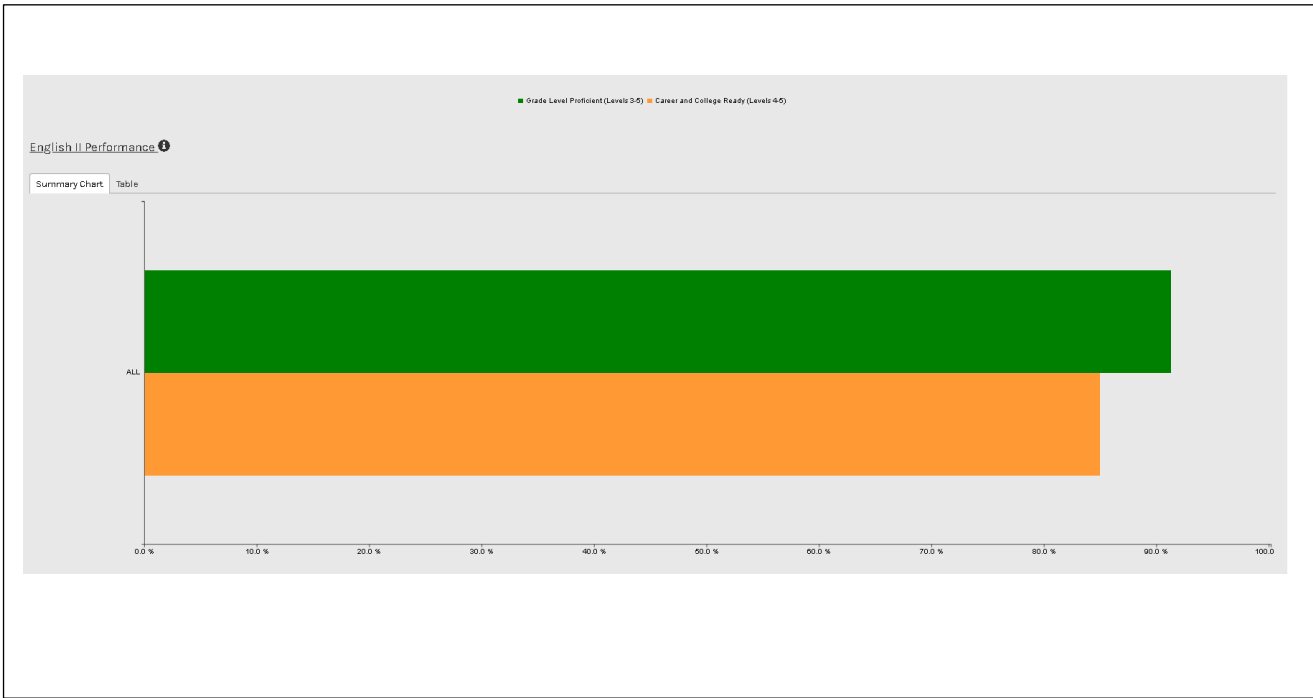


SOURCE: NCDPI STATE REPORT CARDS

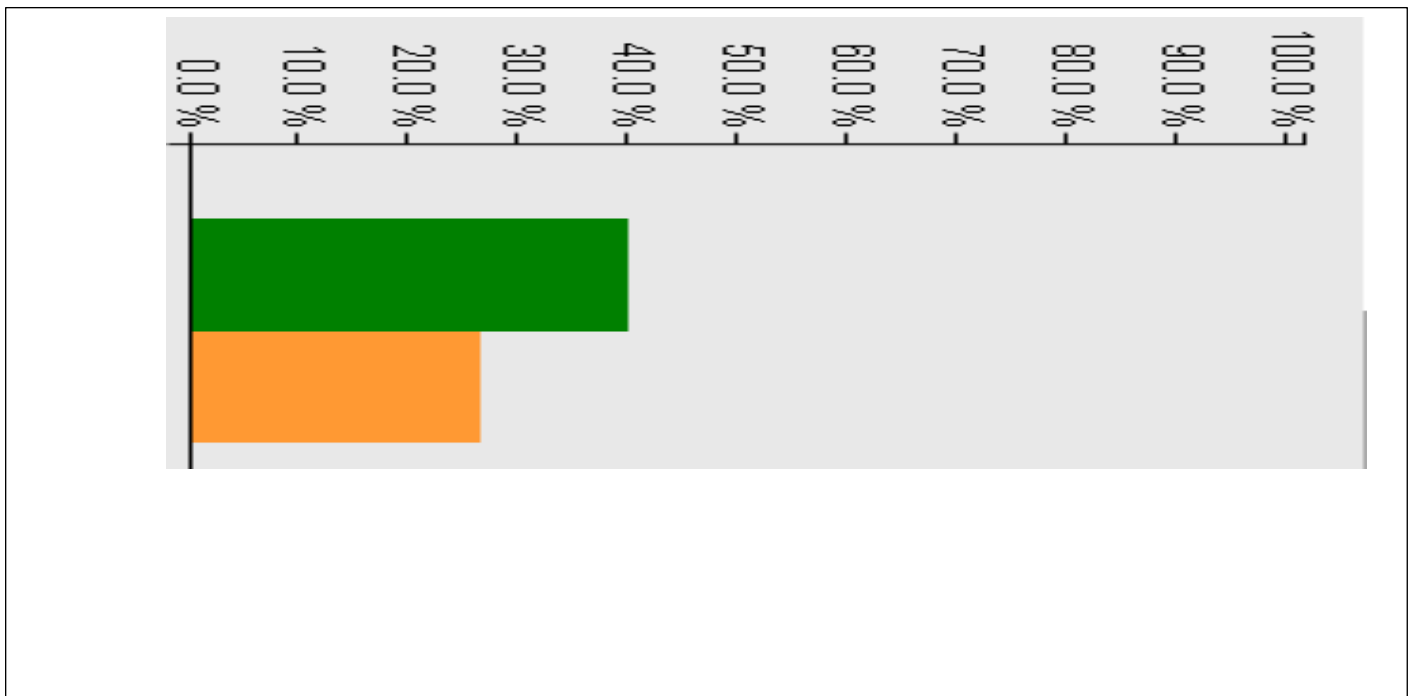
GREEN Bars: Grade Level Proficient (3-5)

Orange Bars: Career and College Ready (4-5)

Ardrey Kell high school 2016-2017 (subgroups not available)



West Charlotte HS 2016-2017(subgroups not available)

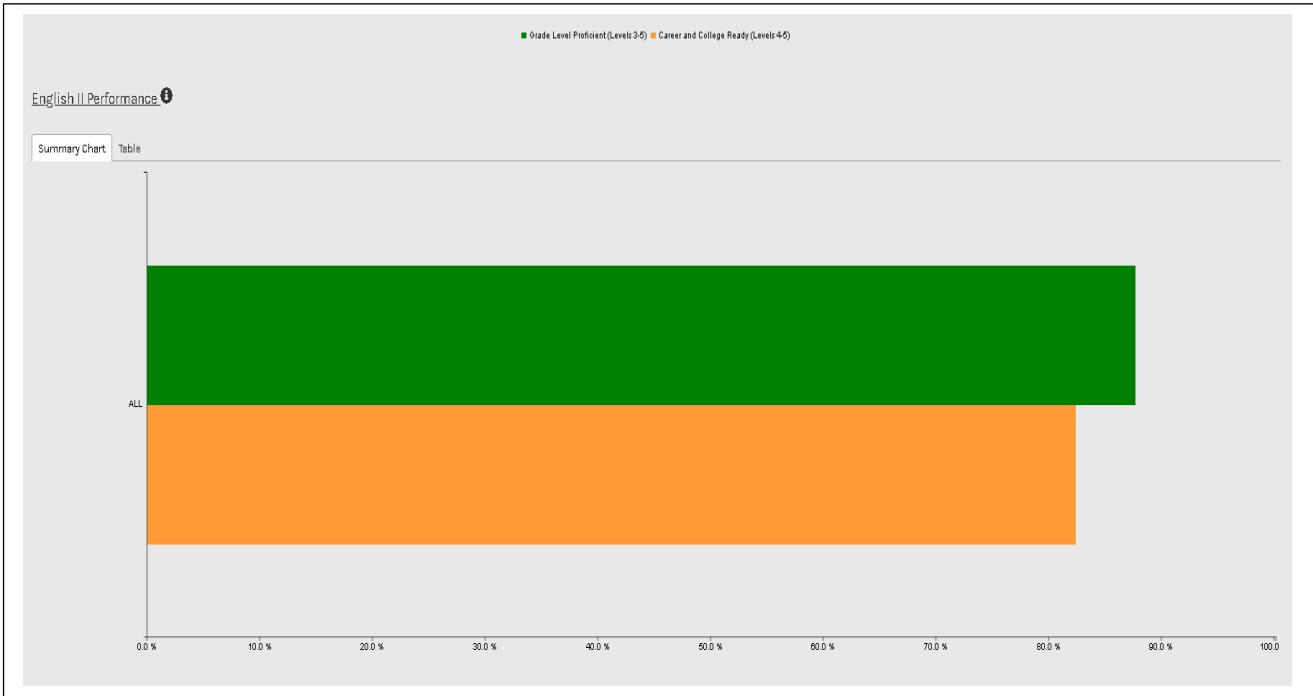


SOURCE: NCDPI STATE REPORT CARDS

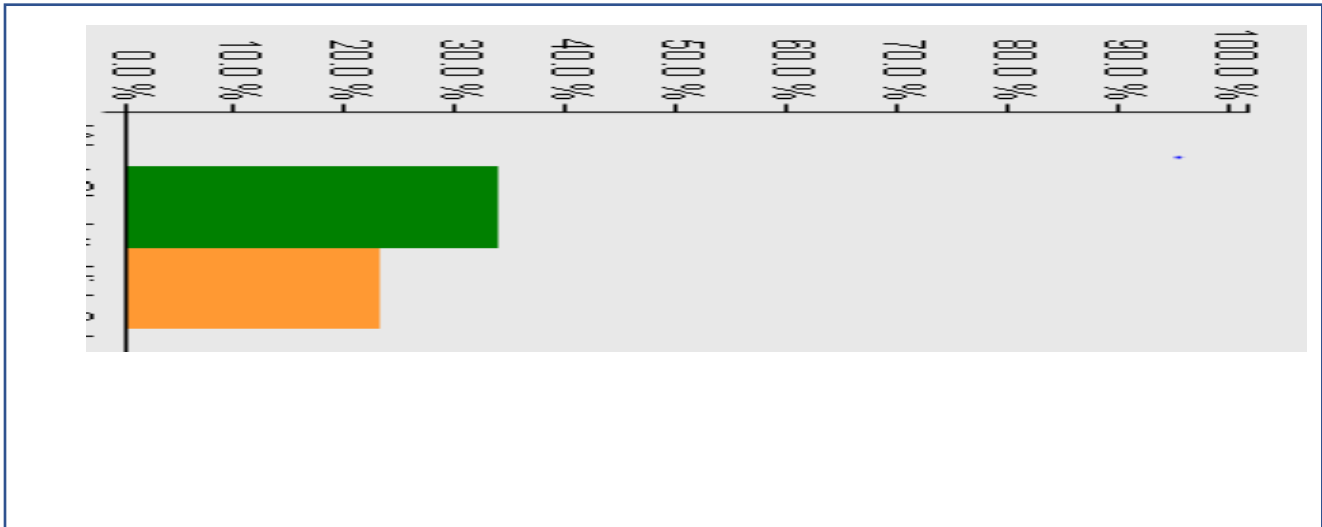
GREEN Bars: Grade Level Proficient (3-5)

Orange Bars: Career and College Ready (4-5)

Ardrey Kell high school 2015-2016(subgroups not available)



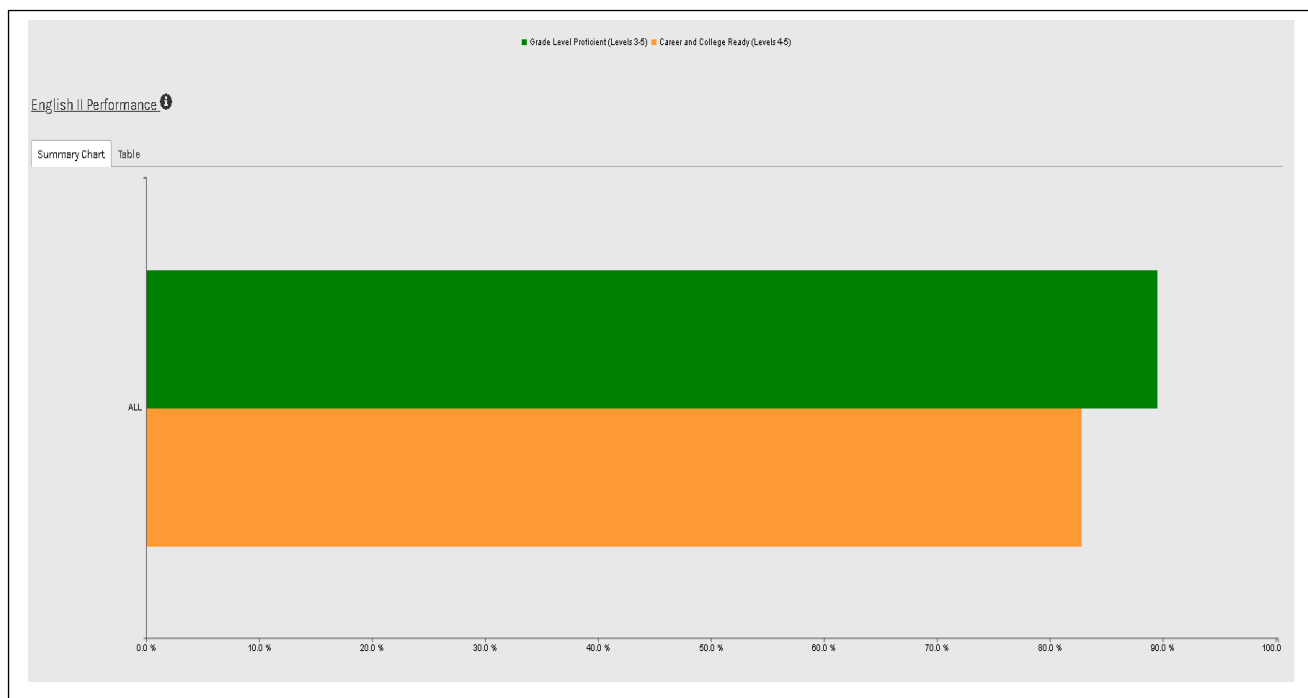
West Charlotte HS 2015-2016(subgroups not available)



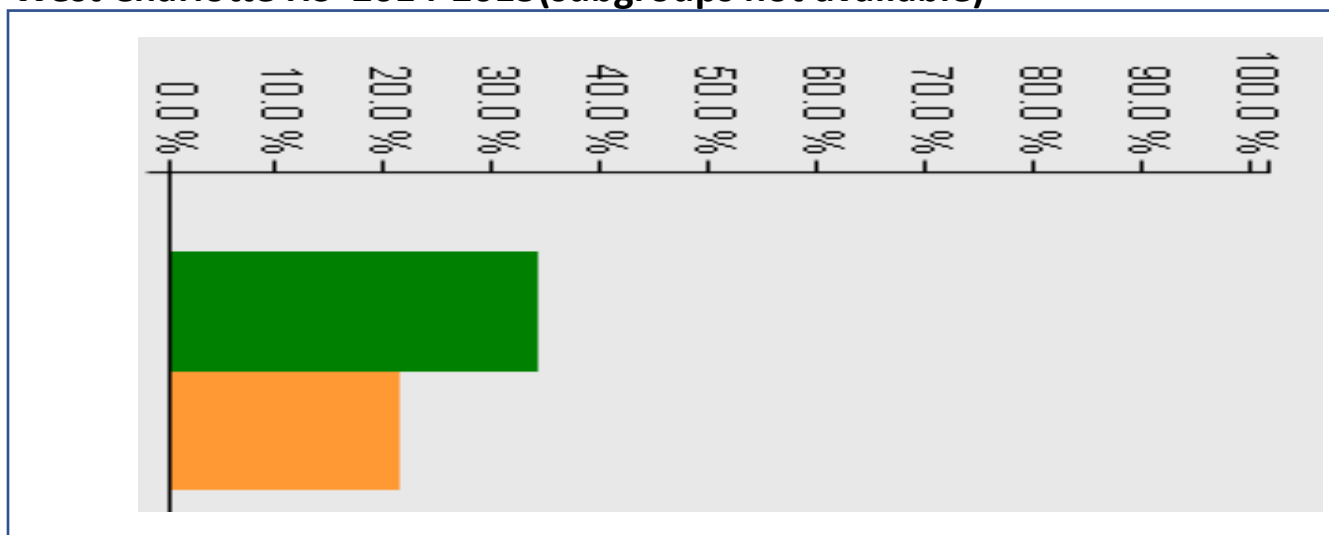
SOURCE: NCDPI STATE REPORT CARDS

GREEN Bars: Grade Level Proficient (3-5)
Orange Bars: Career and College Ready (4-5)

Ardrey Kell 2014-2015(subgroups not available)



West Charlotte HS 2014-2015(subgroups not available)



SOURCE: NCDPI STATE REPORT CARDS

SUMMARY DATA

Totals less than 100% due to rounding and scores of >95 or <5 - source NCDPI

Graduating Class table Ardrey Kell versus West Charlotte – 5year Cohort – All students subgroup

1. For every Ardrey Kell student failing to graduate, three West Charlotte students failed

| | | students | pct grad | graduated | didn't graduated | | | students | pct grad | graduated | didn't graduated | Kell to WCLT failure ratio |
|--------|-----------|----------|----------|-------------|------------------|--|--------|----------|----------|-------------|------------------|----------------------------|
| A Kell | 2014-2015 | 559 | >95 | 537 | 22 | | W. CLT | 404 | 79 | 320 | 84 | 3.8 |
| A Kell | 2015-2016 | 630 | >95 | 605 | 25 | | W. CLT | 416 | 79 | 330 | 86 | 3.4 |
| A Kell | 2016-2017 | 634 | >95 | 609 | 25 | | W. CLT | 361 | 88 | 316 | 45 | 1.8 |
| A Kell | 2017-2018 | 649 | >95 | 623 | 26 | | W. CLT | 370 | 90 | 332 | 38 | 1.5 |
| A Kell | 2018-2019 | 700 | >95 | 672 | 28 | | W. CLT | 417 | 74 | 310 | 107 | 3.8 |
| A Kell | 2019-2020 | 807 | >95 | 775 | 32 | | W. CLT | 391 | 70 | 275 | 116 | 3.6 |
| A Kell | 2020-2021 | 788 | >95 | 756 | 32 | | W. CLT | 369 | 75 | 276 | 93 | 3.0 |
| A Kell | 2021-2022 | 838 | >95 | 804 | 34 | | W. CLT | 331 | 68 | 225 | 106 | 3.2 |
| | | | | 5381 | 224 | | | | | 2383 | 676 | 3.0 |

Diploma Endorsements Ardrey Kell versus West Charlotte

1. Sadly this table shows West Charlotte students, who mostly attended Growth elementary and middle schools, missed by large numbers the futures Ardrey Kell students will enjoy.

| year | | 12th GradeTotal Students | career only | career college college unc | college college unc only | college only | global language | | | 12th GradeTotal Students | career only | career college college unc | college college unc only | college only | global language |
|-----------|---------|--------------------------|-------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|-----------------|--------|-----|--------------------------|-------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 2016-2017 | A. Kell | 649 | 0 | 24 | 252 | | | W. CLT | 370 | 1 | 9 | 113 | | | |
| 2017-2018 | A. Kell | 700 | 0 | 63 | 258 | 4 | 92 | W. CLT | 417 | 0 | 6 | 45 | 2 | 14 | |
| 2018-2019 | A. Kell | 807 | 24 | 88 | 381 | 57 | 2 | W. CLT | 391 | 4 | 7 | 32 | 18 | | |
| 2020-2021 | A. Kell | 788 | 101 | 96 | 580 | 522 | 136 | W. CLT | 369 | 4 | 3 | 36 | 28 | 11 | |
| 2021-2022 | A. Kell | 838 | 101 | 98 | 413 | 408 | 99 | W. CLT | 331 | 0 | 0 | 15 | 13 | 11 | |
| | | | 226 | 369 | 1884 | 991 | 329 | | | 9 | 25 | 241 | 61 | 36 | |

COLLEGE ENDORSEMENT

1. The student shall complete the Future-Ready Core mathematics sequence of Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Math I, II, III or Integrated Math I, II, III; and a fourth mathematics course aligned with the students' post-secondary plans. The fourth math course must meet University of North Carolina system Minimum Admission Requirements or be acceptable for earning placement in a credit-bearing college math class under the North Carolina Community College System's Multiple Measures Placement policy;
2. The student shall earn an unweighted grade point average of at least 2.6; and
3. The student shall earn at least the benchmark reading score established by a nationally norm-referenced college admissions test. The student may retake the nationally norm-references test as many times as necessary to achieve the required benchmark score.

COLLEGE/UNC ENDORSEMENT

1. The student shall complete the Future-Ready Core mathematics sequence of Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Math I, II, III or Integrated Math I, II, III and a fourth mathematics course that meets University of North Carolina system Minimum Admission Requirements that include a mathematics course with either Algebra II, Math III or Integrated Mathematics III as a pre-requisite;
2. The student shall complete three units of science including at least one physical science with a lab, one life science and one additional science course;
3. The student shall complete U.S. History or equivalent coursework;
4. The student shall complete two units of a world language (other than English);
5. Students shall earn a weighted grade point average of at least 2.5; and
6. The student shall earn at least the benchmark reading score established by a nationally norm-referenced college admissions test. The student may retake the nationally norm-references test as many times as necessary to achieve the required benchmark score.

HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?

Anything is possible with CMS' talented staff but the facts below show some dark stains on the district's willingness to raise up all students.

The graduation rates at three high schools have dropped 15%, 21%, and 22% since 2006 WHILE one high school did just the opposite

| | 2006 GRAD RATE | 2020 GRAD RATE | ACTUAL DROP | PERCENTAGE DROP |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| GARINGER | 75.8% | 64.5% | -11.3 POINTS | -15% |
| HARDING | 77.6% | 60.6% | -17.0 POINTS | -22% |
| W. CHARLOTTE | 81.1% | 70.7% | -10.4 POINTS | -21% |
| EAST MECKLENBURG | 69.7% | 84.7% | +15.0 POINTS | +21% |

The cause of these sinking graduation rates is in the increasing number of primary low-performing schools. CMS staff is not preparing kids in the feeders to these three high schools to succeed the next day, next grade, or next school.

2014 16 failing schools

2015 37 failing schools

2019 42 failing schools

CMS does not lack the resources to make these three high schools as successful, as say East Meck, which grew its graduation rate of 69.7 in 2006 to 84.7 in 2020. That is a 22% improvement!

How did the Board of Education let down the students at these three high schools?

Bolyn McClung

January 27, 2022