



Dear Middle School Families,

I'm pleased to announce the launch of our new online grading system, Gradelink.

As mentioned at Back-to-School night, Gradelink allows families to view Middle School grades online. In the Lower School, "Friday folders" and similar tools connect families with how students are progressing academically. In Middle School, the form of communication changes but the goal continues to be to provide timely feedback on academic work.

How Gradelink can support your child's learning

The student-teacher-family partnership is always important at St. Michael's and is the case with Gradelink. In this context, the partnership works when...

- Students put forth their best effort so grades accurately reflect skills and knowledge. This includes asking for help and talking with their families about successes and challenges.
- Teachers provide assessments that align with the curriculum, apply School policies equitably, and communicate well with families.
- Families support students' development of individual responsibility and communicate well with teachers.

When used in this way, online access to grades moves the conversation from a debate about what a student's grade is or should be, to reflection on the habits producing that grade. The goal is to use feedback to drive student learning.

When viewing your child(ren)'s grades please remember...

1. The grade belongs to the student. If adults care and do more about a grade than a child, the child learns passivity. Adolescence is about forming an identity, and we want students to develop responsibility for their own learning.
2. Comparing how a student performs across classes can help identify patterns upon which we can reflect and learn. Judging assignments from one teacher to another as "tougher" or more "fair" rarely helps students. However, if you or your child have questions about an assignment please contact the teacher.
3. Early in a quarter, the relative weight of an assignment is greater than it will be later. For instance, a 79 on a quiz may be half of the course grade in the first couple weeks of the quarter, but will be only a fraction of the grade later in the quarter. Remember the School now sends to high schools transcripts with year-end grades only, not report cards listing quarterly grades.

Sincerely,

Michael G. Turner, Headmaster
Jessica Stargell, Middle School Director



How to connect to Gradelink

You will soon receive an email with your Gradelink account information, including login credentials for parent and student accounts. Once you receive these, you will need to do the following:

1. Go to gradelink.com.
2. Click the LOGIN button in the upper right corner of the screen.
3. Enter our school ID number: 1925.
4. Enter your username and password, and click LOGIN.

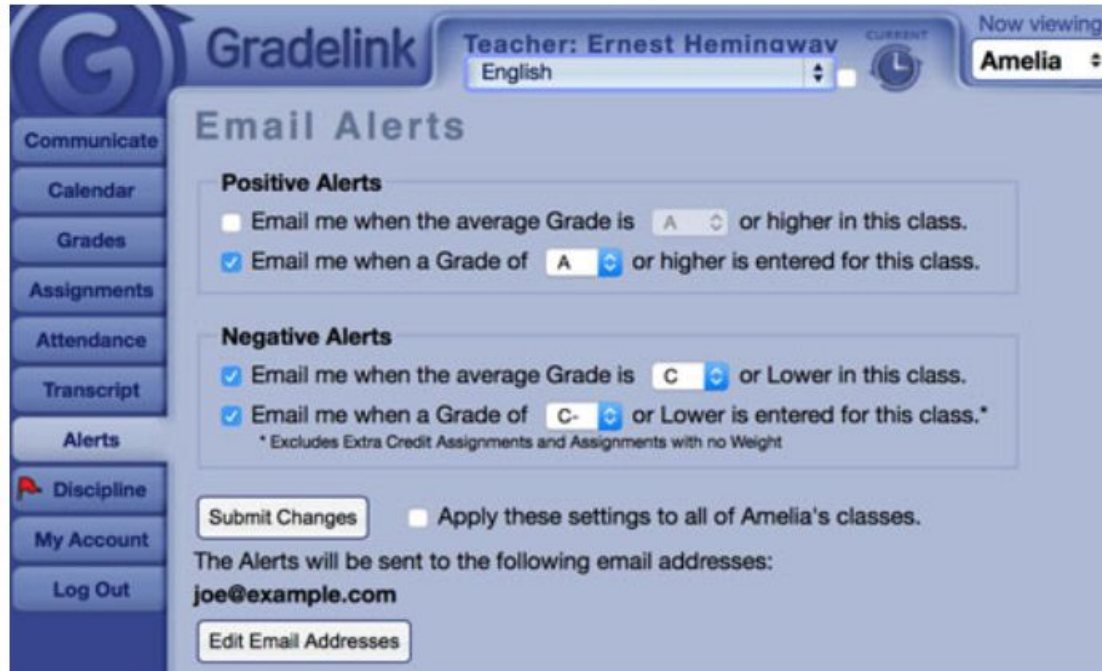
When you first login to the parent portal the '**Current Grades**' page will appear. This page lists the classes in which your child is enrolled as well as the current grade s/he has earned. The letter "P" is shown before each average to show that your child is currently passing the class with a 70% or higher, and "F" will appear for any grade below 70%.

The '**Assignments**' page lists assignments for the particular class that shows up in the drop-down list near the top center part of the page. Assignments in white represent possible upcoming assignments that are due in the future.

The '**Email Alerts**' page allows you to set alerts based on grades. You can set up different alerts for each class. When you set up alerts, you are setting them up for the current class that is listed in the top center drop-down list. If you want to set up alerts for all the classes at once, you can check 'Apply these settings to all classes' check box. To set an alert, click on the checkbox next to the alert you want to set. Next, set the appropriate percentage threshold for the alert. Any time you set alerts, you must click the 'Submit Changes' button after you have set all the alerts on the page.

- There are two common alerts that are set. The first one under the 'The Negative Alerts' section is 'Email me when my student is averaging a Grade of 'x' or Lower in this class'.
- The next popular alert is "email me when a Grade of 'x' or Lower is entered for this class'. This alert will send out an email alert whenever a grade, regardless of whether it was a test, quiz, homework, etc. is entered in the grade book is equal or lower than the percentage threshold set.

(See example on next page)

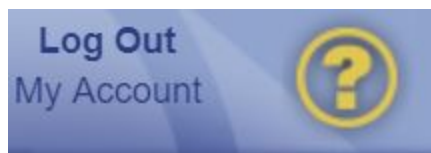


The **'My Account'** page allows you to change your password. You must enter your current password first and then your new password twice for verification.

The **'Log out'** tab will log you out of Gradelink.

If you decide to print, be sure to use the printing icon in Gradelink and not the one on your browser. Otherwise the printout will not come out correctly.

If you need help using Gradelink, you can click on the **'?'** on the top right hand corner of the screen.



If you would like on-the-go access to your child's progress, you can also download the Gradelink Student/Parent app! Download it for free on the [App Store](#), [Google Play](#) and [Amazon Appstore](#).

Note: Most computers, (Mac or PC), made within the last ten years should work well with Gradelink. You do not need to install any software, but simply ensure your web browser is up to date. Gradelink works well on current versions of Internet Explorer, Safari, Firefox, and Google Chrome.