PlusPortals Pointers

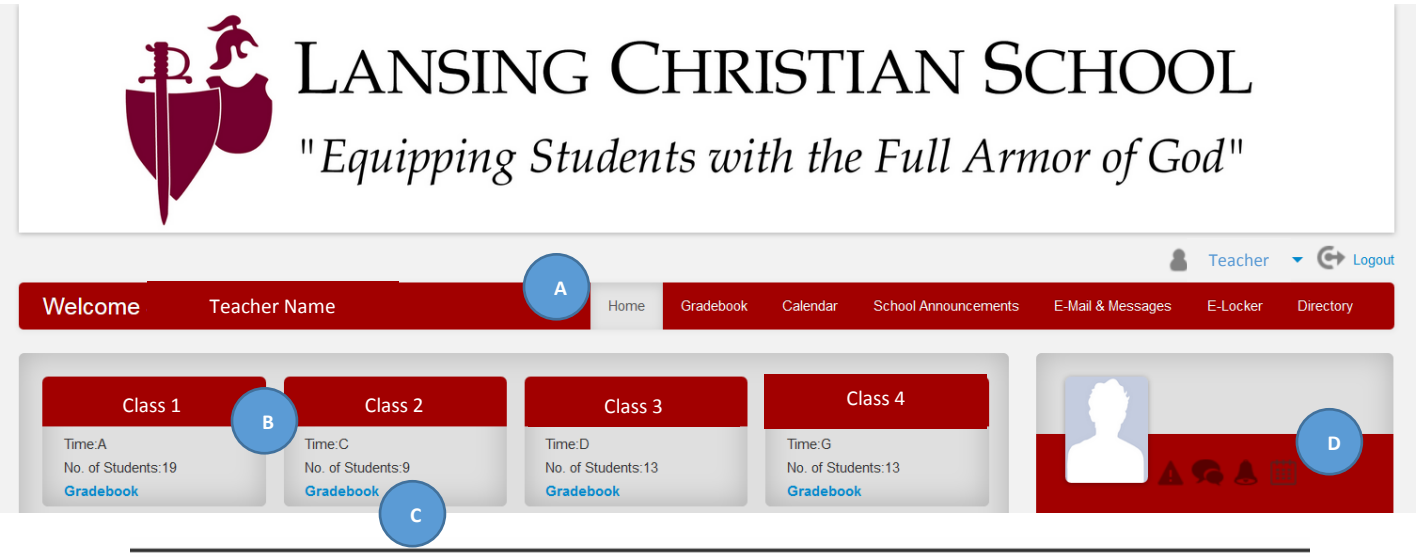
(January 2016)

Congratulations; we've made it through two marking periods with the new Rediker system, with only a few kinks to iron out! Now that we are "pros" at the gradebooks, perhaps we'd like to explore a few additional useful features of PlusPortals. PlusPortals is extremely handy for viewing summary data for all of our classes and for organizing scheduled events and assignments, with the ability to connect them within our gradebooks.

The PlusPortals screen is available at https://plusportals.com/LansingChristian with the same login information as the gradebook site.

(Note: all of the following information is available by downloading the user guide pdf at this link: http://www.redikersupport.com/documentation/media/pdf/plusportals/plusportals-user-guide.pdf What follows is just a quick overview of some the components that may be of use to many of us.)

Here is our PlusPortals **homepage** after logging in:



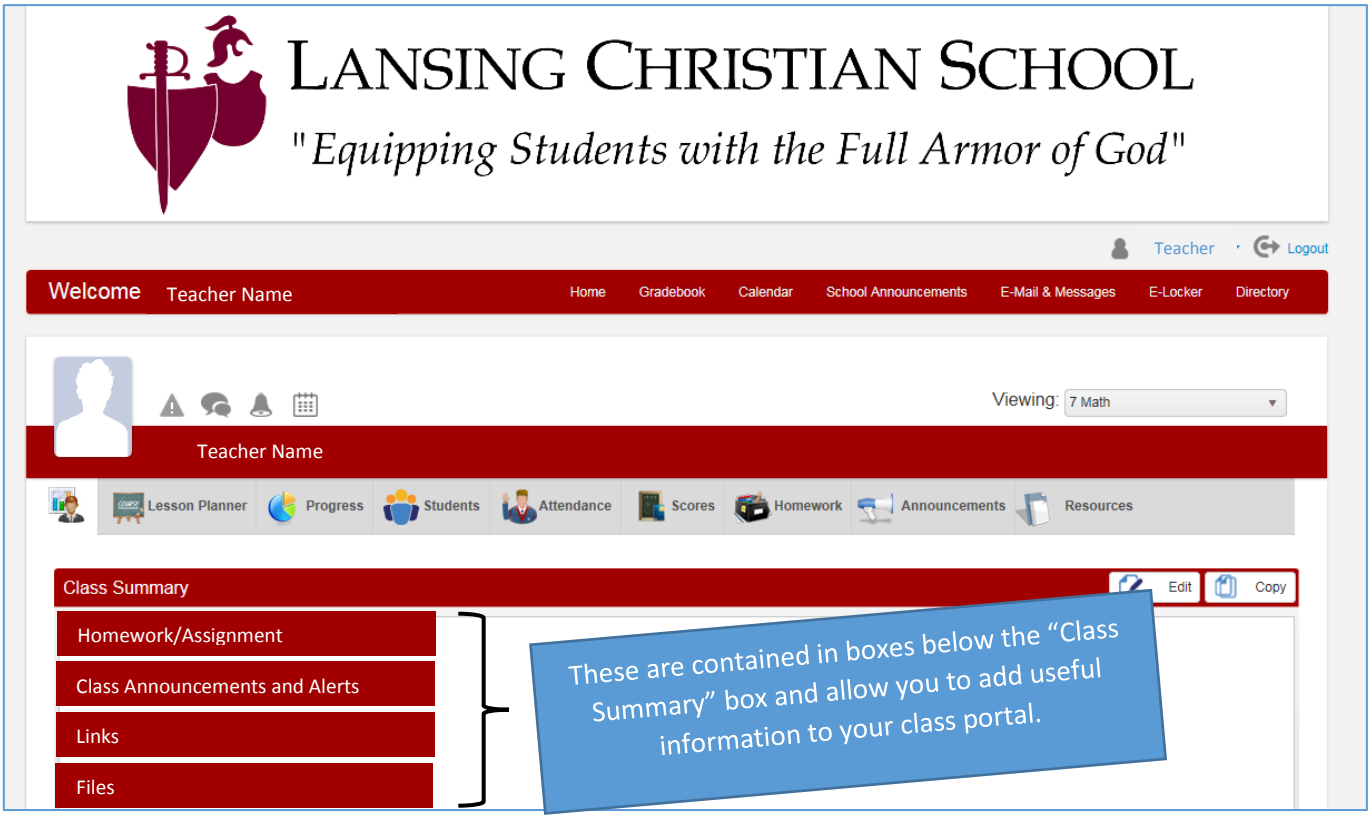
First Half of the Home Page (See Figure Above)

A	Main Menu	Home, Gradebook, Calendar & E-Locker are the ones you'll likely find useful.
B	Your classes: Click a class name to open and manage the class.	and to access lots of information
C	Launch the gradebook for the class.	You can also click "Gradebook" on the burgundy menu.
D	Clicking a notification icon displays details about the notification. Icons from left to right: Alerts, Messages, Notifications, and Calendar.	

Once you click on one of your classes (not the gradebook, just the class name), you can access much information about students and also add lesson plans and/or assignments, as desired. In the following section, the numbers in parentheses indicate the pages in the pdf of the user guide, in case you would like to explore the topic in greater detail.

View Student scores (all of your and their classes + attendance) **(pp. 7, 30-34)**

After clicking on one of your classes, your screen will resemble the view below. The burgundy-topped boxes allow you to add information and assignments to your portal (see following sections), while the gray, illustrated toolbar allows you to access student information.



Moving across the gray menu bar, the icons will achieve the following:

Teacher/Chart icon brings you to the main class page (where we just started).
"Lesson Planner" lets you create a new unit or use one from a previous year.
"Progress" is for progress reports, a feature we likely will not use now (as with "Incidenct Reports").
"Students" brings you to a list of students in that class – click on one to load that student's quarter scores (all subjects), recent grades (all subjects), attendance/tardy totals, and daily schedule.
"Attendance" shows at a glance the absences and tardies for that class period.
"Scores" lists recent class assignments with the option to see the students' scores lower down the page if you click on the corresponding "View Scores" blue icon to the right of the entry.
"Homework" only shows entries you have posted online.
"Announcements" takes you to the announcement/alert section (see next page for details).
"Resources" is a place to organize files and links you'd like accessible to your students.

Add Class info: Summary, Links, Files **(pp. 9-16)**

Via the burgundy boxes – Add New information, edit or delete existing information. Files and Links are also grouped together and accessible on the "Resources" tab of the gray tool bar.
Summary – a general description of the particular class, if you would like to include one.
Links – add website URL's for a particular assignment or for year-long use.
Files – upload files for special projects (Science Fair, Book Reports, etc.). Links and Files can be saved in a "Class Folder" for easy access next year.

Add Class Announcements, Alerts, Calendar Items **(pp. 38, 42-44)**

Here you can leave a brief message for your entire class (e.g. a note about current grades) or alert parents and students about upcoming important events. Click on "**Add New**" to enter the information and to set which class(es) will see it and for how long. You can access this feature by scrolling down to the box or by clicking on "Announcements" in the gray tool bar. Click on "*Calendar*" in the burgundy welcome toolbar to access the calendar to view events, add new events and also to *print off a schedule* of your classes' events for yourself, either as a list or as an actual calendar. (NOTE: Pressing "Home" from this screen will get you back to the original screen from which you can again view your classes.)

Add a Message to be delivered via the Portal **(p. 41)**

The email feature of PlusPortals is not the most useful, as we already have an efficient email system set up, so you probably won't use that, but in case you would like to send a message to a parent or student via the Portal, you can do so here. The drawback is that they will only see it if logged in.

Create a lesson plan and/or post/collect assignments **(pp. 17ff)**

Here is a snippet of what the lesson plan section is capable of. Full details are in the pdf download.

When creating a lesson plan, you can do the following:

- Create a brand new lesson plan or add one from another class or the previous school year.
- Add a summary or objectives
- Add homework assignments or online quizzes
- Add digital resources, such as documents and links
- Add skills and standards (if your school uses them)
- Share the lesson plans with students and parents

The following diagram illustrates how you can manage your units and lesson plans.

A	Create new units.
B	Click the small arrow icon beside a unit to expand it and reveal all of its lessons.
C	Click a lesson in a unit to expand the lesson so that you can add content to it.
D	Use the management buttons at the upper-right corner of a specific unit panel to edit the unit, copy it to a different section, delete it, print it, or add a lesson to it.
E	Clicking the title of a lesson in a given unit panel also expands the lesson, allowing you to add content to the lesson plan.
F	After expanding a lesson, click **Edit** to change the title of the lesson, date range, and visibility. Click **Delete** to delete the lesson.

Add a Quiz for students to take within the Portal **(pp. 21ff)**

Follow the steps in the Quiz-Builder – full details in the pdf download. (More details forthcoming)