

Education

Rocketing to the top of Canada's eSports league

Lethbridge School Division

Helping students build community and practical skills with Lenovo eSports solutions.



Lenovo

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Who is Lethbridge School Division?

Located in south-west Alberta, Canada, Lethbridge is a growing, vibrant city with a population of more than 100,000 people. The school division provides compelling learning experiences to almost 12,000 students through a diverse array of programs at 24 schools, from kindergarten through to Grade 12.

Employing nearly 1,200 people, the organization has developed enduring community partnerships with the Lethbridge Police Service, Lethbridge College, Alberta Health Services, Southwest Alberta Child and Family Services, Alberta Human Services, and other agencies. The division is also home to a thriving co-curricular program that includes a range of athletic, fine arts, and student leadership opportunities.



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The Challenge

Worldwide, eSports viewership runs into the hundreds of millions—and growing. Key games frequently attract bigger audiences than leading sports such as hockey and basketball, and the eSports industry is already valued at more than USD 1 billion. For educational institutions, eSports offers an opportunity to engage new sections of their student body.

Jesse Sadlowski, Director of Technology Learning and Innovation at Lethbridge School Division, explains: “People have a habit of thinking of eSports as just ‘gaming’ for entertainment. But the reality is, just like any traditional athletic sport, eSports promotes leadership and teamwork, develops fellowship, and teaches valuable skills. It’s also highly in demand from our K-12 student body: in fact, we found that interest in eSports exceeded all our expectations!”

In response, Lethbridge School Division began exploring how to build a sustainable eSports initiative. Starting at the Lethbridge Collegiate Institute, the organization kicked off a search for the right technology to support the move.

“We decided that if we were getting involved in eSports, we wanted to equip our kids with leading-edge technology,” remarks Sadlowski. “While we were determined that our eSports initiative would be driven from the group up—with students taking the lead—our goal was to build a dedicated hub that would give participants the tools for both scrimmage and competitive play.”

“eSports is one of the fastest growing markets in the world today. We recognized that it could help our students to develop skills that will not only serve them for a future in the gaming industry, but in the world of software design and technology as well.”

Jesse Sadlowski

Director of Technology Learning and Innovation, Lethbridge School Division

Gearing up for a win

Lethbridge School Division built an eSports arena at the Lethbridge Collegiate Institute and furnished it with Lenovo Legion gaming towers and monitors. The organization engaged Lenovo's eSports consultant to help design the infrastructure and assist with setting up the program.

"Lenovo was a natural choice of vendor for this project, because we had already worked with them on introducing VR solutions to the division with great success," says Sadlowski. "The Lenovo eSports Solutions team had the expertise to help us establish a vibrant, thriving initiative."

Hardware

Lenovo Legion Tower 7i
Lenovo Legion Gaming Monitor

Software

ggLeap
ggRock

Services

Lenovo Consulting Services
Lenovo Warranty Support



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“Over the last two years, we’ve built a solid partnership with Lenovo that’s based on extracting maximum benefit from our technology initiatives for young people in Lethbridge. The eSports project was a unique opportunity to put some of the best gaming equipment in the world into the hands of our extremely enthusiastic students.”

Jesse Sadlowski

Director of Technology Learning and Innovation,
Lethbridge School Division

Pressing play

With help from Lenovo, Lethbridge School Division set up its eSports arena in a two-team configuration. Six gaming PCs are set up on each side of the arena, divided by a wall so that each team does not infringe on the other's play. Lenovo also provided the institution with ggLeap and ggROCK software for management, security and automation of its eSports environment, offering an end-to-end solution that includes technology, software, and services.

Sadlowski comments: "Our eSports space is now accessible to all high school and middle school students in the division. Typically, 11 students play alongside a coach. We've taken the same approach as for any competitive sport—we have coaches and a division eSports coordinator. Through ggLeap and ggRock we have next-generation tools to administer and protect the arena."

“The kids couldn't be any more excited about our eSports arena—they all want to be in that room and get a chance to experience top-of-the-line Lenovo Legion gaming technology.”

Jesse Sadlowski

Director of Technology Learning and Innovation, Lethbridge School Division

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Results

The eSports initiative launched by Lethbridge School Division has proved a huge success, with 200 students across the city joining the program. The organization is establishing itself as a destination for young people interested in participating and competing in the fast-developing field.

“Our high school eSports team is currently ranked first in Canada, and they got there using Lenovo Legion technology,” says Sadlowski. “It’s unbelievable how many students are now being offered scholarships or that are pursuing pro gaming careers. By taking part in tournaments, the team raises money to help evergreen the gaming equipment, so we can build a long-term eSports program that just keeps on growing. We expect Lenovo to be our partner for the long haul.”



200 students and growing participate in the division’s eSports program



#1 national ranking in the Canadian True North eSports league for the Lethbridge School Division’s high school team



Builds student community and useful skills

Through eSports, Lethbridge School Division is increasing inclusivity and preparing students for life after graduation. By embracing the phenomenon of eSports, the organization is turning student enthusiasm into tangible skills and memorable experiences, which for some may even turn into careers outside of being competitive.

Sadlowski concludes: “It’s amazing to see our eSports arena attract students that haven’t been that engaged by other extra-curricular programs, helping them build new communities. Lots of people think of gaming as a solitary activity, but alongside Lenovo we’re proving that it can actually be the opposite of isolating: it brings students together, fostering collaboration and leadership.”

“Lenovo understands our goal: to use smarter technology and solutions to create a more inclusive, equitable, and engaging experience for every student.”

Jesse Sadlowski

Director of Technology Learning and Innovation, Lethbridge School Division

Why **Lenovo**?

By powering up its eSports arena with Lenovo Legion technology and solutions, Lethbridge School Division puts cutting-edge gaming equipment in the hands of students from a range of backgrounds—giving them the opportunity to compete on an international stage.

Crucially, Lenovo was able to offer programmatic consulting and technical guidance to help the organization build a sustainable and successful program.



How do you launch an eSports initiative in style?

Catapulting to the top of the national league with a Lenovo eSports program.

[Explore Lenovo Esports Solutions](#)