

PROFILE

NAME: Lethbridge School Division Esports Program

LOCATION: Lethbridge, Alberta

WEBSITE:

<https://www.lethsd.ab.ca/departments/technology/e-sports>

CHALLENGE

Lethbridge School Division wanted to create more engaging opportunities for students. When its students expressed interest in an esports programs, they decided to give it a try. The division wanted to create impactful events and competitions and in order to do this they needed to determine what technology would best support a successful program.

SOLUTION

Lethbridge School Division partnered with Epson to help meet the goals of their esports program. The division utilizes Epson interactive displays for game planning among teams and large-venue displays to create an engaging environment at competitions.

Promoting Esports and Student Success Across Canada

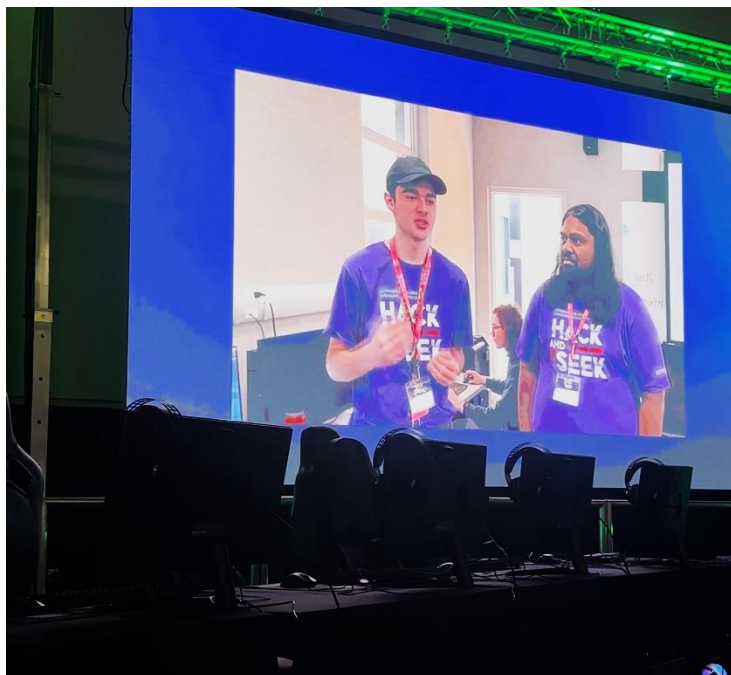
Lethbridge School Division, located in Alberta, aims to engage students in quality learning experiences that develop strong foundations, innovative minds and responsible citizens. The division is always looking for new opportunities for students and when students expressed interest in esports, the division knew it was time to create a program. With the continuing rise of esports, schools such as Lethbridge, are looking to find opportunities for students interested in this booming industry.

“Students asked why we didn’t have an esports program and that got the ball rolling for us,” said Johny Mantello, IT coordinator for Lethbridge School Division. “As a committee, we wanted to make an esports program that was both affordable and successful. Lucky for us, 90% of our tech department are gamers and have a great knowledge of esports.”

Technology Supporting Esports

The first step in planning the esports program was selecting the right hardware to help ensure success. In the esports arena, there are five gaming PCs, along with gaming monitors, chairs, and Epson interactive projectors. When selecting Epson projectors, Lethbridge knew Epson would be a reliable partner for their program. “Epson understands what a school setting looks like and what a school division needs,” said Mantello. “They have been a solid, reliable partner when it comes to classroom peripherals, projectors and printers.”

The BrightLink® interactive display delivers true-to-life 16:10 images up to 100-inches and offers 85% more interactive space versus a 75-inch flat panel. A convenient and seamless solution, the BrightLink features built-in wireless, automatic image alignment and pen calibration for time-saving installation. Plus, it provides a virtually maintenance-free, 20,000-hour laser light source¹ engine with no lamps to replace ever.



With the BrightLink, teams have the perfect setup for game reviews and previews. “The students love when we use the Epson projectors,” said Mantello. “They touch the screen and manipulate the play while explaining to the coaching staff why they did a certain move.”

This gives coaches a better understanding of what students did during the game and how they can help them improve. “It’s a great tool to show students on a large screen what’s working and what isn’t working when they’re playing, and using the video to provide more tactical strategies,” said Mantello.

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- JOHNY MANTELLO, IT COORDINATOR,
LETHBRIDGE SCHOOL DIVISION

Success in Esports

When Lethbridge started the esports program, they decided to make it a competitive sport rather than a sports club. Students try out while also meeting grade and attendance requirements, just like other sports teams. They practice throughout the week covering different aspects of the competitions. On Mondays, students go to the gym and also learn about nutrition. On Tuesdays, students have film day where they go over what they did right and what they can improve upon. Wednesdays are their game days and Thursdays are their scrimmage days.

“Esports is reaching a demographic of students who have traditionally been underserved in the school setting,” said Nathan Koblun, founding director of education for Esports Canada and partner of Lethbridge School Division. “Esports provides these students with a platform to showcase their skills, be praised by their teachers, and revisit their successes through saved streams and recordings. This recognition helps validate their efforts and talents, contributing to their overall sense of achievement and belonging.”

In the first three years of the program, Lethbridge won three Canadian championships and now students are receiving scholarships as well. With the success of the team, the division wanted to host a tournament that could showcase students’ talent and increase the visibility of what esports does in their community and school division.

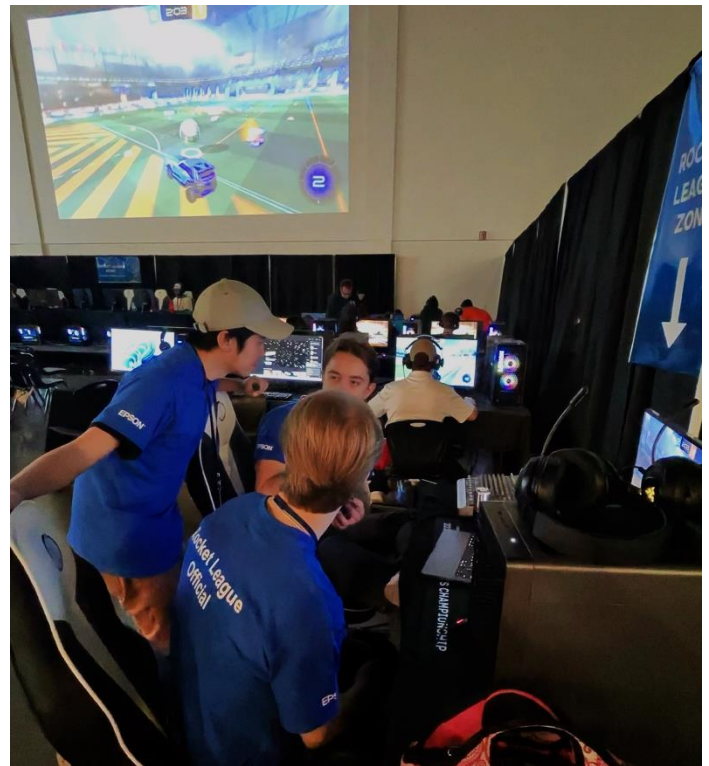
Competing in Esports

The division’s director of technology had the idea to hold a tournament for middle and high school students, which led to the division hosting the Alberta Esports Championships where more than 200 students participated. The division was able to rent a building with a massive floor plan, but also needed to find a way to include parents and community members who would be attending the competition.

With Epson’s help, the tournament had students’ gameplay broadcasted from their screens for attendees to watch them play. The setup included four large-throw projectors for parents and community members to watch the game action.

“Without Epson projection, the event would not have been as inclusive, dynamic and encompassing,” said Kim Hutmacher, the general manager of TLD, who helped with setting up the technology for the competition. “We needed the large-scale projection to include all participants and attendees in the live sports action.”

¹No required maintenance for the light source for up to 20,000 hours. Approximate time until brightness decreases 50% from first usage. Measured by acceleration test assuming use of 0.04 - 0.20 mg/m³ of particulate matter. Time varies depending on usage conditions and environment. Replacement of parts other than the light source may be required in a shorter period.



Looking Ahead

With the success of the high school esports program and competition, Lethbridge is eager to expand its program to the middle school level.

“We’re looking to add more arenas in the high schools, and in middle schools too,” said Mantello. “We’re also hoping to create curriculum and offer classes for esports since there are so many components and future opportunities for students.” From the graphic design side to the broadcasting side of esports, the industry isn’t going anywhere any time soon, Lethbridge School Division is looking forward to finding more ways to engage students in this booming field.

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- KIM HUTMACHER, GENERAL MANAGER OF TLD

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