



## Aurora Regional Fire Museum

### Practical Fire and Life Safety Skills & Pathways in Museums

### Program Highlights and Anticipated Outline

#### About the Museum

The Aurora Regional Fire Museum preserves the legacy of the fire service through our regional collections and exhibits while teaching fire safety and prevention. We honor and protect the past, present, and future of the fire service. Our 58 year history culminates in our values to inspire curiosity, value our community, be responsible stewards, lead with integrity, and serve as a welcoming place in our community. The Fire Museum is located in the heart of Downtown Aurora in Aurora's 1894 Central Fire Station and is managed by their 501c3 Board of Directors currently consisting of 13 individuals comprising our local and regional community and the fire service.

The Illinois Association of Museums honored the Aurora Regional Fire Museum as the **Small Institution of the Year** in April 2026 and with an **Award of Innovation** for Practical Fire and Life Safety Skills & Pathways to a Future in Museums in 2025. The 2026-2027 school year will mark the third year conducting this program at East Aurora High School (EAHS).

#### Program Highlights

- This program will serve up to a total of 300 students at East Aurora High School during the 2026-2027 school year.
- Each class session will consist of 42-minute sessions. We will be in the EAHS building from 10:29 am- 3:13 pm on the selected program days.
- The program consists of 7-8 sessions, 4-5 classrooms each day in attendance and will be repeated 2-3 times to reach 300 students.

#### Program Summary

The Aurora Regional Fire Museum will help create a safer school environment and community through teaching students how to properly utilize a fire extinguisher, certify them in Adult & Child CPR/AED, and teach critical first aid tips and make a mini first-aid kit. Additionally, we will lead an engaging activity and career panel to introduce students to the role museums play in the community and the many career opportunities that exist in museums. This program draws on our mission as a museum and as an institution devoted to teaching fire safety and prevention.

#### Program Outcomes

- Students who successfully complete the training will receive a two-year certification from the American Red Cross for Adult & Child CPR/AED.
- Students who successfully complete the augmented reality Fire Extinguisher Training will receive a certificate that they completed learning how to correctly use a fire extinguisher by using the P.A.S.S method.
- Students who successfully complete the museum session will actively participate in a simulation of what it is like to work in a museum and be exposed to museums as a career path and field of study.



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### **Program Outline**

The program will take place over a total of 7 to 8 class sessions split between *Practical Fire and Life Safety Skills* and *Pathways in Museums*. The schedule reflects 8 classes, however the final schedule will be determined between EAHS and museum staff.

**Practical Fire and Life Safety Skills** training will take place over 6 sessions.

#### CPR/AED (4 sessions)

- Students will obtain their American Red Cross certification.
- Certification is valid for two years from the date of completion and if their certification lapses, they will still retain the skills they learned.

**The Need:** The location of Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrests (OHCA) most often occurs in homes/residences (73.4%), followed by public settings (16.3%). If performed immediately, CPR can double or triple the chance of survival from an out of hospital cardiac arrest. Only about 40% of people who experience an emergency get the immediate help that they need before professional help arrives.

#### Augmented Fire Extinguisher Training (1 session)

- Students will utilize an augmented reality fire extinguisher trainer to learn first-hand how fire extinguishers are used and practice using them in real time. Through augmented reality there is no real fire, water, or risk.
- Students will receive a certificate from the Aurora Regional Fire Museum showing they successfully completed learning how to use a fire extinguisher.

**The Need:** 58% of Americans do not know or aren't sure if they know how to use a fire extinguisher (Kidde, 2021). Fire extinguishers are required in schools, businesses, apartments, hotels, and dorms and recommended in single family homes - making this an alarming statistic. The National Fire Protection Association found that the total number of fires in the United States has risen 12.2% between 2013-2022 and it is trending upward (NFPA, 2023).

#### First Aid (1 session)

- Students will cover a variety of first aid related topics and create a mini first-aid kit that they can put in their backpack, locker, car, or home.

**Pathways in Museums** will take place over 2 sessions.

- Students would be exposed to museums as a potential career field. Students will learn about the work that museums do and learn about local opportunities. The sessions will also highlight other local museums.
- Through a career panel and activity, students will get to practice hands-on what museums do through a mini-activity that will show how museums interpret, research, present, care for, and market their collections. Students will leave with insight into how museums are interdisciplinary and draw on numerous skill sets.



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## **Standards**

### Social Emotional Learning

- 1B. Recognize personal qualities and external support.
  - 1B.4b. Analyze how positive adult role models and support systems contribute to school and life success.
  - 1B.5b. Evaluate how developing interests and filling useful roles support school and life success.
- 1C. Demonstrate skills related to achieving personal and academic goals.
  - 1C.5a. Set a post-secondary goal with action steps, timeframes, and criteria for evaluating achievement.
- 3C. Contribute to the well-being of one's school and community.
  - 3C.4b -Plan, implement, and evaluate one's participation in a group effort to contribute to one's local community.
  - 3C.5b – Work cooperatively with others to plan, implement, and evaluate a project that addresses an identified need in the broader community.

SS.9-12.SOC.2: Analyze the impact of social structure, including culture, institutions, and societies.

CC.11-12.W.1.d – Text Types and Purposes: Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

Additional standards may also be met by this program

## **About the Staff**

Brian Failing is the Executive Director of the Aurora Regional Fire Museum, a position he has held for over ten years. Brian holds a MA in History - Historical Administration from Eastern Illinois University and a BA in History and Urban & Suburban Studies from North Central College.

Rachel Olson is the Program Manager of the Aurora Regional Fire Museum. She previously served as the Museum Assistant, a role she held for three years. Rachel's current role oversees the museum's educational programs and outreach. Rachel holds a MA in Public History from West Virginia University and a BA in History and Sociology from the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee.

Staff resumes are available by request

