

Aurora Regional Fire Museum
Practical Fire and Life Safety Skills & Pathways to a Future 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. It is our vision to honor and protect the past, present, and future of the fire service. Our 57 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.

Practical Fire and Life Safety Skills & Pathways to a Future in Museums received an ***Award of Innovation*** from the Illinois Association of Museums in the spring of 2025.

Program Highlights

- This program will serve a total of 300 students at East Aurora High School during the 2025-2026 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 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 and help certify them in Adult and Pediatric First Aid/CPR/AED. Additionally, we will lead an engaging activity and 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 and Pediatric CPR.
 - If students can be given class time or homework to complete an online portion, we can offer a two-year certification in Adult and Pediatric First Aid/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.
- 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.

Aurora Regional Fire Museum
Practical Fire and Life Safety Skills & Pathways to a Future in Museums
Program Highlights and Anticipated Outline

Program Outline

The proposed program will take place over a total of 7 class sessions split between *Practical Fire and Life Safety Skills* and *Pathways to a Future in Museums*. All students will be sent a pre and post survey to fill out.

Practical Fire and Life Safety Skills training will take place over 5 sessions.

- CPR (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. Even more alarming, 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).

Pathways to a Future 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 include the Aurora Regional Fire Museum and representation from 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. Students will leave with insight into how museums are interdisciplinary and draw on numerous skill sets.

Aurora Regional Fire Museum
Practical Fire and Life Safety Skills & Pathways to a Future in Museums
Program Highlights and Anticipated Outline

Standards

Social Emotional Learning

- 1B. Recognize personal qualities and external supports.
 - 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.

About the Staff

Brian Failing holds an MA in History - Historical Administration from Eastern Illinois University and a BA in History and Urban & Suburban Studies from North Central College.

Since 2016, Brian has profoundly impacted the Aurora Regional Fire Museum as its Executive Director, transforming it from a local treasure into a regional attraction. His visionary leadership, marked by strategic planning, rebranding, and innovative exhibits and programs, has significantly enriched the museum experience.

Beyond his museum stewardship, Brian's multifaceted contributions to community development are noteworthy. He served as the Board Chair for Aurora Downtown, serves as a Peer Reviewer with the Museum Assessment Program, and as a Commissioner on the Historic Preservation Commission in Plainfield, IL, reflecting his dedication to cultural preservation, continued learning, and education.

Program Highlights and Anticipated Outline

Proposed Program Budget

Expense	Amount	Rationelle
Program Supplies: Practical Fire and Life Safety Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPR Certification • Augmented Fire Extinguisher Training 	\$53,100	Program materials, certificates, supplies CPR Certification - includes 2-3 instructors based on class size. Interactive training on how to use a fire extinguisher and other life safety topics
Pathways to a Future in Museums	\$2,000	Interactive museum career activity. \$177 per student Additional Instructors CPR: 1:12 Ratio
TOTAL	\$55,100	