

SELFRIDGE FLYER

Volume 9, Issue 3

"127th Wing — Your Hometown Air Force"

May 2025



DOING OUR PART

Selfridge contributes to nation's defense

By 127th Wing Safety Office

127th Wing

Selfridge Air National Guard Base plays a vital role in our nation's defense.

It's one of many organizations in the military focused on executing the Air Force mission as part of the Department of Defense. Our organization may seem small in relation to the rest of the military, but without the Airmen at Selfridge, those larger Air Force and DoD missions suffer.

That's why it's important that we are all DOING OUR PART because everything we do, or fail to do, contributes to the success or failure of our higher mission.

It's also important to remember that no matter how small the task an individual may have, all effort has an impact on the Selfridge mission. Our Air Force can't operate to its best ability without all of its organizations giving their best effort, and we at Selfridge can't do our best without all of us DOING OUR PART.

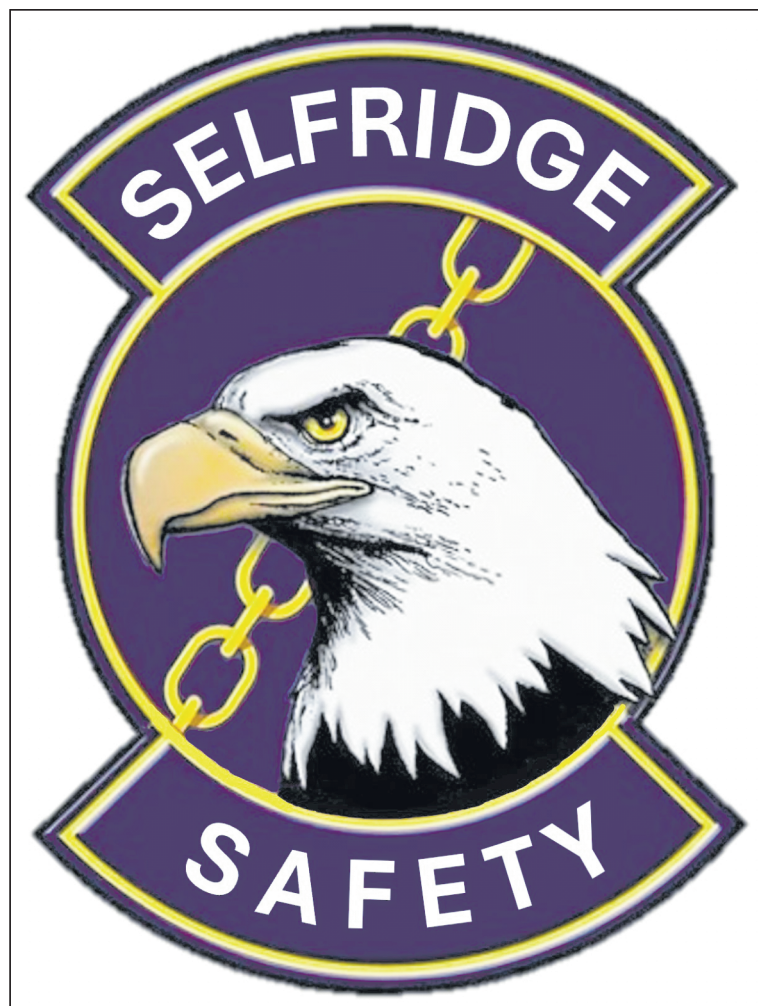
The Airmen across the base are well-trained and motivated to contribute to the success of the mission, but you can't execute the mission if you, your equipment, or your capability are diminished due to a safety mishap.

If an ammo troop cuts their hands, that could result in delays in weapons being built, delivered and loaded on the A-10s, which could result in a late aircraft takeoff.

If those fighters are late to support troops on the ground, our ground forces could take casualties that our fighters could have prevented. If our logistics planners are injured driving on base, they may be unable to process the deployment of our units to execute our missions overseas.

Without the right documentation, diplomatic clearance or transportation support, our KC135s could be delayed from reaching the theater of operations by days. If they're not in theater, the critical assets that need fuel would be unable to execute their mission.

Everyone's job is important, which is why we must ensure we



are all DOING OUR PART to execute the mission safely. We can't execute the mission and support the team if you're hurt, or the equipment needed to support the mission is damaged recklessly.

Regardless of how small the task may seem, it's important that we do the little things right to ensure our mission is executed safely.

If there is an injury on the flightline during a walkaround, how many people need to be diverted from their regular tasks to help, and what delay does that have on the mission?

If there is a driving accident on base that blocks a road, how does that delay everyone getting to work and executing the mission? How many more people are at risk of getting into an accident because they

were distracted watching that accident?

Mishaps have a waterfall effect on the mission and the people who execute it, which is why we should all take preventive steps to ensure we SAFELY execute our mission! Things that feel small like wearing gloves and eye protection when operating machinery, buckling your seat belt when driving, looking both ways before crossing the road, staying hydrated during the summer months, cutting away from yourself when opening packages, and wearing sunscreen are all things that can help you stay safe and execute the mission.

With all of us doing the little things right, we are DOING OUR PART towards mission success!

It may be easy to think about

safety as it relates to the Selfridge mission, but safety doesn't stop after work.

A car accident on Hall and Gratiot is just as dangerous to the mission as an accident on George Avenue and Jefferson. An Airman injured in a car accident can be a detriment to the mission. Motorcycle riders face even more dangers on the road with higher risk of fatal injuries from drunk, distracted or otherwise impaired drivers. Be sure to keep your eyes on the road and watching for traffic, road signs, motorcycles, and STAY OFF YOUR CELLPHONE!

As we move into summer, heat and dehydration are factors that increase the risk of unsafe situations.

Heat can lead to irritability, which can cause people to act more aggressively or become more easily frustrated, and frustrated minds are more prone to unsafe behavior.

Dehydration combined with heat can result in heat exhaustion or heat stroke. Stay cool and hydrated, and prevent the possibility of passing out and requiring assistance.

While enjoying the water and Lake St Clair, it's important to remember to have fun responsibly on the water. Keep on the lookout for other boaters and remember that alcohol while operating any vehicle on the water or on the ground is never a good combination. Staying safe on and off base requires all of us DOING OUR PART!

What you do is important to the Selfridge mission, regardless of whether you work on the flightline or in an office, as a uniformed member or government civilian, and even if you don't work on the base at all, you contribute to a safer Selfridge military community, and safe Airmen accomplish the mission.

The next time you put on your seat belt, put on protective glasses, follow the speed limit, drink water, or put your phone away while driving, you can say confidently, "I'M DOING MY PART!" By your efforts to operate safely at work, home and regular life, you are contributing to Selfridge's mission success. At Team Selfridge, we're DOING OUR PART for mission success and a safer military community!

SELFRIDGE FLYER

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SELFRIDGE BASE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

President
Jonathan Vandenbossche

The Selfridge Base Community Council's mission is to continue improving outstanding relationships between both the civilian and military-service communities centered at Selfridge Air National Guard Base.

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Deputy Wing Commander
Col. David Spehar

Wing Command Chief Master Sergeant
Chief Master Sgt. Bruce Hedrick

127TH WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

Chief of Public Affairs
Mrs. Penny Carroll

Base Visual Information Manager
Mr. Andrew Schumann

Chief of Community Engagement
Mr. Bruce Huffman

Command Information NCOIC
Master Sgt. Chelsea E. FitzPatrick

Public Affairs Staff
2nd Lt. Elise Wahlstrom
Senior Master Sgt. Daniel Heaton
Tech. Sgt. Nicole Erb
Senior Airman Nathan Wingate
Airman 1st Class Jacob Hessen

PUBLISHER'S STATEMENT

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On the cover: President Donald J. Trump addresses Airmen of the 127th Wing at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Michigan, April 29, 2025. Trump announced the F-15EX Eagle II aircraft will replace the retiring A-10 Thunderbolt II.

DOD PHOTO BY U.S. NAVY PETTY OFFICER 1ST CLASS ALEXANDER KUBITZA

WE STAND READY

Joint exercise brings Team Selfridge together

By Bruce J. Huffman
127th Wing Public Affairs

A major accident response exercise conducted at Selfridge Air National Guard Base on April 3, 2025, brought a variety of members together for a realistic training opportunity.

Personnel in the air traffic control tower, Selfridge Fire Department and those assigned to a crashed, damaged or disabled aircraft recovery team, worked with members of Marine Wing Support Squadron — 471, Naval Reserve Center — Detroit and the Selfridge Military Air Museum to simulate a realistic accident training scenario.

A MARE prepares Air Force personnel for a variety of emergency scenarios including aircraft accidents, mass casualty events and other large-scale disasters.

During the April 3 simulation, an A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft notionally lost its ability to lower landing gear, forcing it to make a controlled belly landing directly onto the runway near the museum.

First responders practiced dispatching emergency vehicles to the runway as soon as they learned a pilot reported a mid-air emergency.

As firefighters prepared for the landing, dispatchers discussed aircraft fuel, munitions and pilot status with ATC tower staff.

When the simulated plane crash-landed, firefighters surrounded it with water-pumping trucks and quickly extracted the pilot.

“When you get called out to an emergency, everyone is at their best and all eyes are focused on the crash site and on doing what needs to be accomplished,” said Justin Gulliver, assistant fire chief with the 127th Civil Engineer Squadron.

Once the aircraft was secured and

the pilot safe, the focus shifted to aircraft recovery.

According to Dennis Stricklen, assistant director of the Selfridge Military Air Museum, the plan was to have the Marines from MWSS-471 and the 127th Wing’s CDDAR team lift the museum’s display F-104D Starfighter aircraft so Navy Seabees could repair the sinking concrete pads underneath.

Unfortunately, the night before, several inches of rain fell onto the lift site, flooding the area.

Realizing weather conditions during a major accident are uncontrollable, the CDDAR team sloshed around as they attached the spreader bar to the belly of the aircraft and closely watched a 50-ton crane lift the aircraft off the ground.

Within a few short moments, one of the crane’s front outriggers sank approximately 18 inches into the mud, toppling the opposite side into the air.

U.S. Marines Corps Sgt. Julio Carbal, a crane operator with MWSS-471, expertly lowered the aircraft back to the ground without incident and the mission was paused for safety reasons.

Luckily, the only harm done was enormous ruts left in the grass.

The CDDAR team learned a valuable lesson about aircraft recovery techniques in extreme weather conditions.

A few days later, the CDDAR team returned to the museum and utilized an airbag system to elevate the plane and place it back on its base pads.

“Although we ran into a few problems, I would consider the MARE an overall success,” said U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Christopher D. Johnson, a CDDAR team lead. “The team members gained valuable experience using both a crane and the airbag system to recover aircraft in extreme weather conditions.”

“When you get called out to an emergency, everyone is at their best and all eyes are focused on the crash site and on doing what needs to be accomplished.”

— Justin Gulliver, assistant fire chief with the 127th Civil Engineer Squadron



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY BRUCE HUFFMAN

Airmen of the 127th Wing, Michigan National Guard, attach a spreader bar to a crane at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Michigan, April 3, 2025. The specialized crash, damaged or disabled aircraft recovery team practiced activating and recovering an aircraft during a major accident response exercise.



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY BRUCE HUFFMAN

Airmen of the 127th Wing lift a simulated disabled jet at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Michigan, April 3, 2025. The specialized aircraft recovery team used a 50-ton crane and airbag system to practice their skill set as part of a major accident response exercise.

HISTORIC

President Donald J. Trump deplanes a VC-25A of the 89th Airlift Wing, Presidential Airlift Group, Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland on Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Michigan, April 29, 2025. Leaders from across Michigan gathered to greet Trump ahead of a press conference and announcement of the 127th Wing gaining F-15EX Eagle II aircraft to replace its retiring A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft in the near future.

U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY SENIOR
AIRMAN NATHAN WINGATE



Future of aviation emerging at Selfridge

By Master Sgt. Chelsea E. FitzPatrick
127th Wing Public Affairs

Airmen assigned to the 127th Wing, Michigan National Guard, learned the future of their dual flying missions when President Donald J. Trump announced the F-15EX Eagle II aircraft will replace the A-10 Thunderbolt II mission when the latter is retired.

Trump, joined by Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth; Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, the adjutant general of the Michigan National Guard; U.S. Army Maj. General Paul Rogers and Michigan Air National Guard assistant adjutant general; and U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Daniel J. Kramer II, declared the strategic basing decision to approximately 300 Airmen and members of the media at Selfridge Air Na-

tional Guard Base.

"This is a huge, bipartisan win for Michigan, decades in the making, that will grow our economy and make our country safer," Whitmer said. "Since day one, I've been laser-focused on securing a new fighter mission at Selfridge and supporting the brave Servicemembers who step up for our communities every day."

The announcement relieved years of uncertainty about what airframe, if any, would replace the 127th Wing's A-10 fleet after the Air Force began officially retiring the plane, nicknamed the "Warthog," in 2022. The uncertainty was replaced with concern when, in 2024, the Air Force announced Selfridge ANGB was selected as the preferred location to host the next KC-46A Pegasus refueling mission to replace both the A-10 and KC-135 Stratotanker.

"Divesting the aging A-10 fleet and KC-135s and replacing them with the KC-46 ensure Selfridge ANGB has an enduring and modern mission that meets the requirements of the National Defense Strategy," the Air Force wrote in the Jan. 12, 2024, press release announcing the new mission.

Flown by Airmen assigned to the 107th Fighter Squadron and maintained by Airmen of the 127th Maintenance Group, the A-10 mission replaced the 127th Wing's F-16 Fighting Falcon aircraft, relocating the fleet from the 110th Fighter Wing in Battle Creek in early 2009. In 2011, the 127th Wing completed the typical three-year aircraft conversion process in two-and-a-half years when the Air Force fully certified the A-10 mission.

"For 15 years, we've flown the A-10 with

pride and unmatched skill and will continue to do so until the very last flight," said Brig. Gen. Matthew Brancato, commander of the 127th Wing and Selfridge Air National Guard Base.

Selfridge Field was opened July 1, 1917, when the Michigan National Guard took possession of the former Joy Aviation Field, and transferred it to the Army a week later. After the Air Force became a separate military branch in 1947, its name changed to Selfridge Air Force Base. On July 1, 1971, the Air National Guard took command from the Air Force, changing the name to what it is today.

In 1972, the predecessor of the 107th FS converted from a reconnaissance to fighter mission and redesignated the unit as the



U.S. ARMY NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY 2ND LT. PAIGE BODINE

Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer shakes hands with troops during a press briefing at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Mich., on April 29, 2025. The visit marked President Donald J. Trump's 100th day in office, during which he announced that Selfridge ANGB will host a new F-15EX II fighter jet mission, reinforcing the installation's strategic importance.



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY SENIOR AIRMAN NATHAN WINGATE

U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Israel Anschetz, a load planner with the 127th Wing, Michigan Air National Guard, places chalk on a VC-25A of the 89th Airlift Wing, Presidential Airlift Group, Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland on Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Michigan, April 29, 2025. Selfridge ANGB hosted a press conference for President Donald J. Trump where he announces the 127th Wing would receive 21 F-15EX Eagle II aircraft to replace its retiring A-10 Thunderbolt II jets.

Future

FROM PAGE 4

107th Tactical Fighter Squadron.

In more than a half century since taking on the "fighter" moniker, the 107th FS has operated three fighter and two attack missions: F-100 Super Sabre, A-7D Corsair II, F-16 Voodoo, F-16 Fighting Falcons and the A-10. Converting the F-15EX will be a welcomed challenge, one that generations of 127th Wing Airmen have accomplished time and again throughout the history of the enduring fighter mission.

Brancato says this defining moment is owed to many people committed to the continued excellence of Selfridge and the 127th Wing.

"This milestone is the result of years of dedication and advocacy and we are deeply grateful to the President, Gov. Whitmer, our congressional delegation and our military leadership for helping make it happen," Brancato said. "Their efforts have ensured not just a new aircraft, but continued mission strength and stability for our Airmen."



Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth speaks with U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Paul D. Rogers, the adjutant general of the Michigan National Guard, during a special event at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Michigan, April 29, 2025. President Donald J. Trump visited Selfridge to announce plans to bring 21 F-15EX Eagle II aircraft to the 127th Wing.

U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY TECH. SGT. DREW SCHUMANN

FULL STEAM AHEAD

STARBASE One children's program needs your support



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY BRUCE J. HUFFMAN

Using a protractor and mathematical equations, students input block code into a Sphero Bolt robot to navigate a course. This exercise prepares students for the next station in the Mars Room, where they will program a rover to traverse across the surface of Mars.



U.S. AIR NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY BRUCE J. HUFFMAN

STARBASE One was established at Selfridge Air National Guard Base in 1991. The Department of Defense adopted the program nationally in 1993. There are now more than 75 STARBASES located at military installations across the country.

By Bruce J. Huffman
127th Wing Public Affairs

Budget constraints at the Department of Defense may force STARBASE One — the Science, Technology, Engineering, Aviation and Mathematics (STEAM) program — at Selfridge to rely on donations from the community to keep its doors open for hundreds of Michigan students this summer.

STARBASE One at Selfridge is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that provides an out-of-this-world learning experience for more than 1,800 southeast Michigan fifth graders annually. It is the brainchild of Rick Simms, STARBASE One director, who established the very first STARBASE in the country here in 1991. The DoD adopted the program nationally in 1993. There are now about 80 STARBASES located at military installations across the country.

“We were doing STEAM education here, before anyone even knew what STEAM was,” Simms said. “Unfortunately, budget cuts may force us to close our doors this summer.”

Simms grew up near the base in the 1980s and remembers sitting at the end of the runway on Hall Road with his dad when he was 8 years old watching airplanes. “A C-130 flew in just above our heads for a landing, and I remember thinking how it was the biggest airplane I had ever seen in my life,” Simms said. “His love for all things aviation began at that moment.”

For years, Simms dreamt about becoming a pilot and began building and hanging plastic model airplanes from the ceiling in his bedroom.

He joined the Civil Air Patrol at Selfridge in ninth grade around the time the movie “Top Gun” came out and vividly recalls the special effects in the movie “Star Wars” that fueled his enthusiasm for flying. When poor eyesight kept him from going to the Air Force Academy and becoming a fighter pilot, Simms directed his efforts toward his second love and pursued a career in filmmaking at Wayne State University. His passion for flying and sci-fi movies is evident in the details everywhere you look at STARBASE One.

“I grew up on ‘Star Wars,’ ‘Indiana Jones’ and ‘ET,’ so I had a passion for film,” Simms said. “Combining my love for technology and science with the creative aspects of film, I knew a creative blending of the two would give us an opportunity to reach kids in a way that you can’t in

a traditional classroom. As soon as they walk through the door, they can get excited about what they’re seeing. You’re actually touching on other senses that may not even be perceived, but the students know they’re someplace different, someplace interesting, and fun.”

According to Jill Brodzik, who handles accounting and procurement at STARBASE, there are interesting items and stories behind every doorway at the center. Students are taught to use 3D printers to make spare parts for the equipment they use to conduct experiments, and each class prints out a small gift for one of their teachers. According to Brodzik, one student even started a 3D printing company after attending classes at STARBASE One. “Students are also taught how to be good people while they’re here and that we are only limited by what we’re able to imagine,” he said.

“In the early days, some of the STARBASE staff trained at Disney,” Brodzik said. “Rick Simms, our director, wanted to bring the same excitement to the learning experience that you might find at an amusement park.”

Inside, you’ll find life-size replicas of the Space Shuttle cockpit and the Destiny Module from the International Space Station. Student groups are immersed in video scenarios and work together to solve problems, utilizing engineering techniques and formulas on iPads to complete a series of interesting challenges.

Students must determine what supplies they’ll need for their mission, what the capacity and payload will be, and what kind of scientist or engineer will be most effective for the mission.

“Each station builds on the skills learned at the previous station and the students don’t even realize they’re using things like algebra and geometry as they input block code into the robots because they’re having so much fun,” Brodzik said.

“We’re not here to teach for mastery; we teach for inspiration,” Simms said. “Through a variety of creative aspects and engaging activities, you can tap into something a little bit different that will inspire the kids. For me, sitting at the end of a runway watching a C-130 inspired me and helped me stay focused. I was not super intelligent. I was inspired. That is our goal at STARBASE One.”

For more information about how you can help inspire a child by supporting STARBASE One, go to its website at starbaseone.org.

A LIVING TRIBUTE

Selfridge museum open for season

By 127th Public Affairs
127th Wing

The Selfridge Military Air Museum, located on the grounds of the historic Selfridge Air National Guard Base, continues to serve as a living tribute to more than 100 years of military aviation history and service.

Open to the public during seasonal hours and special events, the museum offers visitors a one-of-a-kind opportunity to explore an impressive collection of more than 30 static aircraft displays, historic military vehicles, aviation artifacts and interactive exhibits.

From early biplanes to Cold War-era jets, each display tells the story of the service members who flew, maintained and supported these powerful ma-

chines.

"Selfridge is one of the oldest continuously operating military airfields in the nation," said Steve Mrozek, director of the museum. "This museum is a window into Michigan's deep aviation roots and the generations of military professionals who called this base home."

Housed in a historic hangar dating back to the World War II era, the museum also features a restored control tower, flight simulators and the new Aviation Education Center.

Visitors can walk among aircraft like the iconic A-10 Thunderbolt II, the F-106 Delta Dart, and the mighty C-130 Hercules — each representing a chapter in the base's distinguished history.

The museum is run by volun-



teers, including many veterans and former Selfridge personnel, and is supported by the Michigan Air Guard Historical Association.

Educational group tours, field trips and community outreach events are available by appointment.

A highlight of the summer will be when the Air Museum hosts its annual Wheels & Wings Car Show from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 23.

The show cars will be parked around our Air Park next to the 30 beautiful military aircraft on display.

Be sure to bring your camera! All show cars are welcome and should be registered via our website.

The Car Show contact person is Duane Michno, 586-707-3615.

The museum is currently open from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$8 for seniors and veterans, and \$5 for children ages 4-17.

All proceeds support the ongoing preservation of aircraft and expansion of exhibits.

For security reasons, all individuals without a U.S. Government ID card, Common Access Card (CAC) or Defense Biometric Identification Sys-

FYI

Hours: The museum is currently open from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays

Admission: \$10 for adults, \$8 for seniors and veterans, and \$5 for children ages 4-17

Website: selfridgeairmuseum.org

Phone: 586-239-5035

tem (DBIDS) card are required to have a mandatory security background check performed for a visitor's pass before entering the base.

For more information on base access, log on to the Museum webpage at selfridgeairmuseum.org or call 586-239-5035 for more information.



PHOTO COURTESY OF SELFTRIDGE MILITARY AIR MUSEUM

Students enjoy a visit to Selfridge Military Air Museum.



Macomb County Schools Students and Staff

With Gratitude for our U.S. Servicemen and Women who Sacrifice for our Freedoms



Anchor Bay Schools, Armada Area Schools, Center Line Public Schools, Chippewa Valley Schools, Clintondale Community Schools, Eastpointe Community Schools, Fitzgerald Public Schools, Fraser Public Schools, Lake Shore Public Schools, Lakeview Public Schools, L'Anse Creuse Public Schools, Mount Clemens Community Schools, New Haven Community Schools, Richmond Community Schools, Romeo Community Schools, Roseville Community Schools, South Lake Schools, Utica Community Schools, Van Dyke Public Schools, Warren Consolidated Schools, Warren Woods Public Schools

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