**HISD names Lyons ES, West Briar MS administrators as 2017 Principals of the Year**

|  |
| --- |
| *Feb. 9, 2017 —*Houston Independent School District Superintendent Richard Carranza, along with school board members, made surprise visits to [Lyons Elementary School](http://www.houstonisd.org/Domain/20236) and [West Briar Middle School](http://www.houstonisd.org/westbriar) on Thursday to name the district’s top campus leaders of the school year. Lyons Elementary School Principal Cecilia Gonzales was named HISD’s Elementary Principal of the Year, while West Briar Middle School Principal Keeley Simpson was selected as HISD’s Secondary Principal of the Year. Both winners will advance to the state’s regional principal of the year competition.“I am so proud of our principals and the incredible work they do each and every day to ensure the success of their campus, students and teachers,” Carranza said. “The level of student achievement at these schools did not happen by accident.”With the principal of the year awards, district officials consider state accountability ratings, campus distinctions, and student achievement and growth, as well as overall leadership and commitment to the district’s key initiatives. Gonzales, who has led Lyons Elementary since 2007, is a veteran educator with more than 25 years of experience. She began her education career with HISD as a first-grade teacher. “This is the best day ever,” Gonzales said. “My students, staff, and parents – we made this possible because of all of them. We wouldn’t receive this award without them. It really makes you feel like what you do every day is just so worth it.”HISD Board of Education Trustee Anna Eastman of District I where Lyons is located applauded Gonzales and her staff for their leadership and dedication to the school. “Today is about special grown-ups who come here every day to help students succeed,” Eastman said.Simpson, in her fourth year as principal of West Briar, has 15 years of education experience. She began working at HISD in 2005 as a high school history teacher at Lamar High School, where she later served as assistant principal.“I’m overjoyed to see how happy my kids are for me,” Simpson said. “I couldn’t have done this without them or the teachers. This speaks to the work that’s happened here at West Briar in the past couple of years. This is an amazing place to be.” |

HISD Board of Education Trustee Holly Maria Flynn Vilaseca, who represents District VI where West Briar is located, said it’s important for the district to commend educators who set the standard high.

“These educators have made a tremendous commitment to ensure that their school is not only a nurturing environment but also one that provides high expectations and ample opportunities for student learning.”