La. Principal of Year winners named

Darlene Pace of Bossier Parish, center, reacts to the announcement she won the Elementary School Principal of the Year Award Wednesday evening at the State Archives Building. She is seated between two other finalists: Andrea Martin of Winn Parish, left, and Mary Dupre of St. Landry Parish.

Darlene Pace of Central Park Elementary in Bossier Parish was named the winner of Louisiana Elementary School Principal of the Year Wednesday night.

The middle school winner was Denise Cates of Edward Livingston Middle School in Orleans Parish. The high school winner was John Sartin of Winnboro High School in Franklin Parish.

Brenda Sterling of Goodwood Elementary was one of six finalists for elementary school principal of the year.

Sterling has been principal at Goodwood Elementary for the past 11 years. She has been a teacher and principal in the parish system for 22 years.

Before going to Goodwood, Sterling was an assistant principal at Southeast Middle, an administrative assistant at Parkview Elementary and a teacher at Mayfair and Eden Park elementaries.

Sterling was not trained as a teacher, but was a psychology major who earned her certification through a special program called "The Teacher Corps."

"I came in the back door," she said.

Being a finalist is really a recognition for her personnel at Goodwood, Sterling said.

"It's an honor for me to represent my fine staff," she said.

Other finalists were:

Elementary schools: Andrea Martin, Winnfield Kindergarten, Winn Parish; Mary H.B. Dupre, South Street Elementary, St. Landry Parish; and Carolyn B. Sanders-O'Hare, Jefferson Elementary, Jefferson Parish.

Middle/Junior High finalists were: Janice Bernard of Albany Middle School, Livingston Parish; Gale Gates of Broussard Middle School, Lafayette Parish; James Smith, Phillips Middle, Webster Parish; and Al V. Heimbach, Moss Bluff Middle, Calcasieu Parish.

High Schools: James Seabaugh, Benton Middle/Senior, Bossier Parish; Jimmy Anderson, LaGrange High, Calcasieu Parish; William Percy, Northshore High, St. Tammany Parish; Carl Langley, Hathaway High, Jefferson Davis Parish; and Anita Dumas, John F. Kennedy High, Orleans Parish.