According to one colleague, Dr. Michelle Willis “possesses the enthusiasm of a new educator combined with the mature judgement of a veteran administrator.” As the current principal of Gillespie Tech Elementary School, a PreK-8 school serving over 500 students, Willis has successfully led three schools off of probation status throughout her 13 years of service as a principal for Chicago Public Schools (CPS). In the case of Gillespie, the formerly failing school went on to achieve the highest performance rating possible, Level 1+. Dr. Willis’ successful leadership is rooted in her rigorous commitment to embedded professional development and her belief that instruction practices are best elevated by cultivating leadership school-wide by upholding the foundations of mutual respect for all stakeholders. Gillespie is the only school within the CPS system and one of only 300 schools worldwide to hold the distinction of being a SMART Showcase School, evidence of Willis’ passion for integrating technology into teaching and learning practices. Dr. Willis supports technology initiatives through distributed grant development, with all teachers participating annually. Willis is currently a certified principal mentor through the Illinois Principals Association. She holds an Ed.D. in Curriculum and Instruction from Loyola University of Chicago, an M.S. in Education with a Reading Specialization and an M.A. in Education Administration from Chicago State University, and a B.S. in Economics and Business Administration from the University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh.