Dr. Melissa Philley has five years of administration experience, all of which she has spent as principal of Ann Smith Elementary (ASE), an urban preK-2 school serving nearly 800 students. Under her leadership, differentiated instruction has become an essential component of ASE’s school culture, grounded in the now commonly held expectation that “all students will learn and grow.” Dr. Philley has led this shift through her focused facilitation of PLCs guided by annual themes, targeting areas such as guided reading instruction, writing pedagogy, CCSS mathematical practices, and ELL instruction. This rigorous commitment to increasing achievement at all levels has led to significant growth and recognition ASE’s strategies, particularly in reading and writing. ASE has been named a model school for PBIS and writing instruction, honors that Philley credits to the school’s use of research-based instruction practices and effective systems for behavioral support. In 2014, Philley introduced a STEAM initiative, naming a commitment to go beyond the three R’s to teach the four C’s: creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, and cooperation. The program includes weekly computer lab time, funding for blended learning devices, and enrichment opportunities in areas such as robotics. Dr. Philly holds a Ph.D. and an Ed.S. in Curriculum and Instruction from Mississippi State University, as well as an M.A. in Curriculum and Instruction and a B.A. in Secondary English Education from the University of Mississippi.