

Part III

The Way Forward: Connecting Theory and Practice

Do the difficult things while they are easy and do the great things while they are small. A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step.

Lao Tzu

Part III discusses the importance of the assistant principalship as an organizational leadership role. It raises critical questions regarding assistant principals' roles, and it calls for coordinated efforts by practitioners, theorists, and researchers to review current conceptions of this role. It proposes that theoreticians and practitioners need to work together to develop a clear articulation of the assistant principalship and to examine its importance in creating student success and effective schools. A deeper understanding of the personal, professional, and organizational aspects of administrative passages and transitions is also recommended. Building on suggestions made by assistant principals and the existing literature, this section also provides recommendations for improving the assistant principals' role, and for creating coordinated and sustainable structures that scaffold the developmental leadership needs of newcomers and support the creation of equitable communities of practice.