

Part I

Background

Passage, *pas'ij*,

Noun 1. (a) *the act of passing*: movement from one place to another; migration; (b) change or progress from one process or condition to another; transition; (c) the enactment of a law by a legislative body; 2. (a) *permission, right, or a chance to pass*; journey; voyage; *the accommodations of a passenger*; (b) the charge for such accommodations; 3. (a) *a way or means of passing: a road or path*; (b) a channel; (c) a hall or corridor that is an entrance or exit; passageway; 4. (a) *that which happens or takes place between persons*; interchange, as of blows or words; 5. (a) *a short segment of a written work or speech*.

Intransitive verb: to make a passage, or voyage; journey.

The *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary* provides multiple definitions of the word passage that capture the complexities of the transition of teaching to administration. This section introduces the reader to the metaphor of passages as it relates to newcomers and their organizations, and it provides the rationale for and the theoretical underpinnings of this book. Chapter 1 situates the topic of administrative passages within the study of educational administration. It discusses why it is important to understand new assistant principals' transitions and their stories. Issues related to assistant principals, the factors and processes that shape their career transitions, and the questions that guide this work are also discussed.

Chapter 2 situates this discussion within psychological and sociological theories of change and transition that inform our understanding of administrative passages. Common socialization stages, tactics, and outcomes are discussed with reference to new assistant principals' transitions, and questions are raised regarding the impact of socialization approaches on newcomers' development of leadership praxis. This chapter concludes with a description of the conceptual framework that emerges out of these bodies of research and my ongoing research on the assistant principalship.