



## Welcome to ICF *Education Connections*

The January 2017 issue of *Education Connections* begins the new year with a look at ICF's industry leadership in working with states in monitoring, support, and evaluation of charter school programs. Next, we look at a series of instructional videos on formative assessment produced by ICF in partnership with the Commonwealth of Virginia. Our issue closes with a profile of Dr. Shani James, ICF thought leader on charter schools.

ICF's expertise extends from early education to K-12 schooling, to postsecondary education and workforce development. The solutions we devise with our clients enhance their capacity to achieve the outcomes they seek. Visit our [website](#) for more information about ICF in education.

## ICF Provides Charter School Monitoring & Evaluation Services



ICF offers three types of services to state charter school offices to help them successfully manage their federal Charter Schools Program (CSP) grants:

**1. *Charter school monitoring and oversight.*** As a member of the team currently serving as the monitor of the U.S. Department of Education's Non-State Education Agency grantees, ICF has responsibility for working with states to manage all onsite and remote monitoring visits, identify technical assistance needs, and provide technical assistance to individual schools. We develop frameworks for monitoring that account for risk indicators, data sources, available resources, and potential requirements for corrective action. We support states implementing monitoring frameworks, in understanding the framework, collecting and analyzing data, reporting findings and recommendations, and overseeing corrective actions.

**2. Authorizer monitoring and oversight.** As a member of the National Association of Charter School Authorizers, ICF understands the principles and standards for quality charter school authorizing and works with authorizers to collect and review evidence that documents compliance with state regulations.

**3. State-level program evaluation.** ICF works with state staff to review performance measures and evaluation plans, collect data to report on performance measures and answer evaluation questions, and submit routine reports to state officials, including assisting with required CSP GPRA reporting. We have partnered with state education agencies to conduct statewide evaluations of charter schools in Maryland (2008–2012) and Texas (2011–2016). Visit [this link](#) to see the 2011 report, Maryland’s Public Charter School Program.

## ICF Produces New Instructional Videos Through State Partnership

Since 2013, the Appalachia Regional Comprehensive Center (ARCC) has partnered with the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) to provide technical assistance to help educators understand and apply formative assessment instructional practices in the classroom. ICF, which has the cooperative agreement to manage the ARCC, responded to VDOE's interest in giving Virginia educators the opportunity to see examples of formative assessment practiced in real Virginia classrooms. To create video segments of Virginia teachers providing classroom instruction, ICF staff began videotaping in April 2016 in three schools, with the goal of embedding at least six new videos into the existing training modules. On videotape, at least two teachers in each school teach lessons illustrating their new practices, and principals explain how they set up and manage the program and the positive changes they have seen and attribute to the new formative assessment instructional practices.



View the videos at [this link](#).

*"You're combining your instruction with your assessment. So you know as you go along that they're learning, or not, and you can correct it as you go along" – Marjorie R. Tankersley, Principal, Hugh Mercer Elementary School Fredericksburg City, Virginia*

## Profile of ICF Thought Leader Dr. Shani James

**Dr. Shani James** leads the design and conduct of complex research and evaluation studies



at ICF, primarily in education, evaluating K-12 and higher education initiatives. A special interest is the role of charter schools in public school reform. She has conducted evaluations of state education agency (SEA) U.S. Department of Education (ED) Charter School Program (CSP) start-up grants, managed a team of monitors for ED's CSP non-SEA grants, managed a team of reviewers for a statewide evaluation of charter school

authorizers, and served as a peer reviewer for ED's CSP SEA grant applications.