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Amber Northern, Ph.D., is senior advisor in the Office of the Secretary, tasked with recommending reforms for the Institute of Education Sciences to ensure that it delivers high-quality and actionable research, relevant data, and proven practices for practitioners, students, and families. She is the senior vice president for Research at the Thomas B. Fordham Institute, a national think tank focused on K-12 education research, analysis, and commentary. In addition to overseeing the Fordham Institute's research portfolio, she routinely writes for the Education Gadfly Weekly and hosts a research segment on the Education Gadfly Show podcast.

Northern taught at the University of Virginia's School of Continuing and Professional Studies and served as a senior study director at Westat Research, where she led multiple federal and state-level evaluations. She holds a Ph.D. in education evaluation and policy from the University of Virginia. Appointed by Governor Glenn Youngkin in 2023, she currently sits on the Virginia State Board of Education.