To Whom it may concern,

Thank you for agreeing to serve as an expert adviser/mentor to our Advanced Placement Capstone Research student. The AP Research course is a rigorous, college-level program of study and can garner student’s college credit and more importantly prepare them to be College and Career Ready. For this course, students are required to complete a research project, write a 5,000-word undergraduate-level paper and present an oral defense to a panel. The paper includes the following elements: Introduction and Literature Review; Method, Process, or Approach; Results, Product, or Findings; Discussion, Analysis, and/or Evaluation; Conclusion and Future Directions; and Bibliography.

Expert advisors represent a resource for teachers and students in a variety of areas (i.e. expertise in specific disciplines, fields, or methods.) AP’s philosophy is to have students direct their own research project. Therefore, AP has written some helpful points for expert advisors and includes some points that Expert Advisors should do and should not do. Here is a list of points that can be done:

* when asked, should ask questions and provide feedback and guidance to students regarding their choice of research questions/project goals, data-or information-collection methods, and analysis strategies
* may hold individual work-in-progress interviews with students to discuss the progress of their papers or presentations, explore issues and/or discuss topics and perspectives, and question students as necessary
* may provide necessary background for a topic—including suggesting possible resources—so that students are not disadvantaged in their exploration
* may help students with the mechanics of the research process (e.g., strategizing to find answers to questions or helping them understand how to access resources)
* may provide general feedback to students about elements of their papers or presentations that need improvement
* may vary in number, according to the needs of the paper or presentation

Some points expert advisers may not do:

* generate research questions/project goals for students
* conduct or provide research, articles, or evidence for students
* write, revise, amend, or correct student work
* provide or identify the exact questions a student will be asked prior to his or her defense (i.e., students should be prepared to answer every one of the oral defense questions)
* provide unsolicited help (i.e., students must initiate conversations that call for expert adviser feedback, such as asking a question to the the expert adviser can then respond)

Expert advisers may be drawn from the faculty; the community; local or nonlocal businesses and industries; and higher education institutions. If you have questions please reach me on my cell phone at 406.431.6511 or email me at thollow@helenaschools.org. You may serve on the panel for the student’s oral defense if you are available in April. Thank you for supporting, encouraging and serving as an expert adviser.

Sincerely,

Mr. Tyler Hollow

Helena High School AP Research Teacher