



# Shell Lake Stories: Wisconsin Chili Lunch and Bringing a Bison Farmer to the Classroom



*Emily High*

The best part about Farm to School is the community involvement and support that I have seen throughout my time here at Shell Lake. Back in November I began my planning for the Wisconsin Chili Lunch by reaching out to farmers that would be willing to sell to us. After publicly announcing the event, I had multiple different farmers that donated to the event. The F.A.C.E. (Family and Consumer Education) teacher at the school agreed to have her classroom cook the chili and cornbread. I had community members from the school happily agree to help serve the day of the lunch. There were people from other communities, like Cumberland and Siren, that had heard about the event and drove to see what it was all about. Administration spoke out in support of the chili feed.



This quarter was the first time the Farm to School program had brought in a farmer to the school to present to the students. I brought in a man named Taylor from Sky High Bison to talk about his work and the cultural significance of what he does. He brought in fur, a skull, and his wonderful knowledge of bison. He talked about his personal experiences, the history of bison, and a practice called regenerative agriculture. Regenerative agriculture reverses climate change and soil degradation by moving herds of animals to different pastures to allow the previously occupied land, grass, and soil to regenerate. Taylor was able to demonstrate this with the students by having them act like a herd of bison roaming around the classroom. This was a fun and unique experience for the students that I am hoping they will remember for years to come.

These were the main highlights of the spring semester, but there is a lot to look forward to in the coming days. I have been putting together plans for an outdoor classroom that will take place in the summer. I have been planning cooking days with the F.A.C.E. students to explore different foods that they may have never tried before.

