Area Children Organized to Replant Natives (ACORN) Project

Agenda -
a. What is ACORN?
   On surface:
   - Habitat restoration
   - Community involvement
   In application:
   - ACORN can provide a real-world context in which to apply science and math concepts through inquiry-based learning investigations
   - Helps teachers meet state required 40% lab time
   - Teachers and students become contributing members to scientific and education communities

b. Place-based Inquiry: Scientific inquiry and place-based education.
   - Provides inquiry based learning that is centered on or near the campus (Levels of community: home, school, neighborhood, city, state etc.)
   - Place-based Education differs from simple environmental education by focusing on building a student’s sense of identity within their community rather only on environmental improvement.
   - Community is Key.

c. How does ACORN work?
   - Teachers learn how to apply TEKS and scaffold inquiry instruction
   - Teachers use field experiences to present knowledge and skills to students within a real-world context.
   - Students apply standardized protocols to monitor ACORN Programs.
   - Data collected by students in the field is reported via www.project-acorn.net website.
   - Data submitted is reviewed by an ACORN advisory board.
   - Data reporting and feedback loop establishes students as active and valuable members of a community of scientists.

d. What are the ACORN Programs?
   ACORN Teachers may choose any program(s) that meet their classroom’s or target population’s needs. ACORN students select (or restore) and monitor
   - Tree Grids
   - Waystations
   - Tree Banding sites
   - Watersheds
e. ACORN website ([www.project-acorn.net](http://www.project-acorn.net)) provides a resource for teachers and students.
   - Helps teachers take measurements in a timely manner
   - Provides digital and printable forms for data collection in field
   - Provides a means of sharing activities with other teachers and schools
   - Provides a forum for teachers seeking feedback on lessons, activities, or ideas
   - Allows recalling and sorting of data by teachers and students to identify trends

f. OLLU Support
   - Monthly meetings to participating ACORN teachers to discuss implementation of projects, and problems.
   - Relevant professional development activities
   - Campus adoption by community (e.g. Texas Master Naturalist, Native Plant Society)
   - Campus visits by observers and Master Naturalists
   - Summer training on tools and protocols used by ACORN teachers
   - Learning resources for native flora and fauna

g. START SIMPLE!
   - OLLU has developed an implementation plan form designed to assist teachers in considering their campus needs, student needs, campus resources, and mini-grant opportunities.
   - The implementation plan starts teachers thinking about how they can use ACORN to best reach their own unique student populations.
   - Start with one ACORN program.

h. Cost
   - Cost per campus approximately $2500 for measurement tools and supplies used by students in field, plus annual supplies consumed.
   - Project ACORN website has a planner that allows teachers to approximate the cost of their ACORN projects based on the programs selected ([www.project-acorn.net/acorn-budget/](http://www.project-acorn.net/acorn-budget/))