**ELC AWARDED $30,000 GRANT FROM THE SELBY FOUNDATION FOR NEW STEAM MACHINE**

**Palmetto, Florida, December 8, 2021** – The Early Learning Coalition of Manatee County (ELC) has been awarded a $30,000 grant from The Selby Foundation to create a new STEAM Machine mobile classroom that will increase ELC’s educational fleet to six vehicles.

The new STEAM Machine will have disabled access and be constructed from a school bus donated to the ELC by the School District of Manatee County. The Selby Foundation grant will contribute towards the exterior and interior buildout, custom wrap, and high-end technology that delivers an amazing learning experience to local children.

Paul Sharff, ELC Chief Executive Officer, said: "Our organization is so grateful for the support of The Selby Foundation. This investment will allow us to introduce even more Manatee County students to this valuable STEAM learning tool. When students participate in activities that combine different elements of STEAM, they develop problem-solving, critical thinking, collaboration, planning, and observation skills under the umbrella of the creative process. Once again, we would also like to thank Superintendent Saunders for her support in donating a school bus that was being decommissioned – this is the second time the District has given us a bus, and we truly appreciate our partnership with them as we work hand in hand to support early education."

The STEAM curriculum focuses on science, technology, engineering, the arts, and math. ELC's STEAM curriculum engages early learners in real projects within authentic environments and lays the academic groundwork for math and science.

*The Selby Foundation is a private foundation founded by William G. and Marie Selby in 1955. The Foundation supports Sarasota, Manatee, Charlotte, and DeSoto counties through capital grants and scholarships. Since its establishment, the Selby Foundation has provided more than $120 million to the community. For additional information regarding the grant process, please visit [www.selbyfdn.org](http://www.selbyfdn.org).*
life that a child’s future educational success is determined and the critical role of parents, as their child’s first and most important teacher.
To learn more about Coalition’s services, go to www.elc-manatee.org or call 941-757-2900, extension 2101