## **2024 SPECIAL NEEDS ROADEO - STUDENT PROFILES**

**AJ** (11) an elementary student who lives with his grandparents and is on the autism spectrum, he has limited speech communication and can be highly anxious when routines are changed. The biggest challenge with AJ is his fixation with getting up and walking down the aisle when the bus is within sight of his home.

**Twyla** (14) a high school freshman with Down's syndrome. She loves Taylor Swift and has collected friendship bracelets that she will share and trade whenever possible. She wears headphones and has to sometimes be reminded to sing quietly when listening to her music.

**Otis** (16) a high school student who has an emotional disorder and will often be overwhelmed or exhibit negative behavior if he has a bad weekend or a challenging day at school. Otis responds well to direct demands rather than long verbal instructions and does well when given space to regroup or cool down.

**ZOEY** (13) as a middle school student she has come a long way but still exhibits childlike behavior, especially when she wishes to avoid a request for something she doesn't want to do. She will scream, kick, or throw herself down. She is able to respond to visual requests and warning's and if given a minute of "planned ignoring" can be more easily redirected to return to visual choices.

