U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Food & Nutrition Service

Guide to USDA's Web-Based Prototype Application

v1.0

NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH & SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAMS

FOOD & NUTRITION SERVICE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

3101 Park Center Drive
Alexandria, VA 22302
Phone 703.305.2054

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ICON KEY	
ⓘ	Valuable information
?	Q&A
🖱	Tech Tip

How to Use this Guide

The "icon key" on the left shows symbols that you will find throughout the manual that emphasize certain pieces of information. "Valuable information" highlights important, take-away messages about the application. "Q&A" is just as it sounds: a series of questions and answers on a range of topics. And the "Tech Tips" contain information related to the code or other technical aspects of the application.

Navigate with Ease

Use the **Table of Contents** on Page iii to jump directly to where you want to go. Hold down your Control (*Ctrl*) button and click on the section to go directly there.

What if I have questions that are not covered in this guide?

If you have additional questions beyond what is included here, follow your usual process of contacting your State agency, if you are a School Food Authority (SFA), or your FNS Regional Office, if you are a State agency. If you have questions about the functionality or capabilities of your existing online application, please contact your IT department or system vendor. If you have feedback or comments about the FNS web-based prototype application, you can email WebApp@fns.usda.gov.

A Design with a Purpose

An evidence-based design aimed at improving the application process for thousands of school districts and millions of families.

An overwhelming majority of America's school children—roughly 50 million elementary and secondary school students—attend institutions that participate in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) school meal programs. Most consume school meals on a regular basis. In total, about 100,000 schools and institutions serve more than five billion meals through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and two billion via the School Breakfast Program (SBP) to America's children each school year.

U.S. government assistance subsidizes all program meals and allows schools to serve free and substantially reduced-priced meals to children from low-income households. Traditionally, households have applied for free or reduced-price meal benefits by submitting paper or online applications to their schools. Millions of these applications are filed every year, and nearly 9 million low-income children were approved to receive benefits in school year 2015-16 through these applications.

However, we know that there are issues with reporting, calculating, and processing applications, and many applications contain errors that result in incorrect eligibility decisions for children. While online applications have the potential to reduce or eliminate calculating and processing error, household reporting error remains a challenge.

Is use of the new application required?

No, adoption of the new web-based prototype application is not required. FNS understands that setting up or modifying online applications requires additional resources, but encourages districts to adopt the key integrity features of the new prototype.

Reducing error rates in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs was one of the main motivations behind the development of the web-based prototype application.

Many existing online applications mirror the designs of paper-based applications, which by nature, are static and constrained to the area of an 8 ½" x 11" sheet of paper.

What is it?

The web-based school meal prototype application is a functional model that is meant to illustrate and advance the development of integrity-focused, user accessible, web-based design. The prototype demonstrates how an online application can take greater advantage of the dynamic capabilities of an electronic platform. Like FNS' paper prototype application, it can be customized to meet the individual needs of State and local agencies. And while use of the application is optional, FNS encourages adoption of its critical integrity features.

Can I use it?

The application was developed using "open source" code, so it is free to use and copy without charge. It is available for download from the FNS website. It is important to note that it will require some initial investment before it is ready to use. The cost will vary depending on a number of factors, including any systems that are already in place, and access to and capabilities of IT resources. If you go through a vendor for your application, they are allowed, even *encouraged*, to borrow code and design features from the FNS prototype.

The application is mobile-friendly, which means it will recognize the type of device the applicant is using and adjust accordingly. That means that families can access and complete the entire application via smart phone or tablet.

Why should I use it?

Districts that already offer online applications recognize their ability to reduce burden and the risk of error at both the household and school district levels. The FNS prototype builds on the best features of existing online applications and incorporates lessons from recent research to further reduce error and improve the user experience (UX, as they say in the tech world). These include guiding applicants through a structured "interview" to avoid mistakes and prevent the submission of incomplete applications. They also include easy user access to instructions through integrated popup and comprehensive help. These features should help reduce the volume of questions and assistance requests received by districts from households. Also, since the prototype is mobile-friendly, a parent who has access only to a smart phone will get the same high-quality UX when applying as a parent with access to a computer.

Section
1

Informed design: Reasons & research behind the web-based prototype application

The science behind a human-centered design.

The Access, Participation, Eligibility, and Certification Study (APEC) conducted by USDA in school year 2012-13 showed that one in five applicants was certified into the wrong benefit category or denied benefits altogether due to applicant mistakes and administrative processing error. The most significant applicant errors were missing household members and omitted income sources – information that was central to the process of developing the web-based prototype.

Despite the additional questions and features in the web-based prototype application over FNS' paper prototype, the minimum requirements for information collected on an application for free or reduced price school meals have not changed. They can be found at 7 CFR 245.2, *Documentation,* (1).

In addition to APEC, the development of the web-based prototype application was informed by other research, both internal and external to FNS. In 2015, FNS partnered with the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) Innovation Lab to redesign its paper prototype application for the school meal programs. The FNS - OPM Lab partnership applied a *human-centered design* approach to integrate feedback from parents in the DC metro area, and school district officials around the country, into the new design.

FNS looked in a different direction for assistance with its web-based prototype. In 2016, the agency partnered with a small team of White House Presidential Innovation Fellows for expertise in social design and software development. As in 2015, this new FNS partnership turned to parents and school district staff for their perspectives on the application process.

Despite the fact that the web-based and redesigned paper applications look and function very differently, many of the lessons and insights that came out of the research were the same. The figure to the right shows some of the recurring themes encountered in the agency's conversations with parents and district officials. To pick just one example, applicants often expressed uncertainty whether to "…include my child who is temporarily away at college on my application?" (The answer is yes, by the way.)

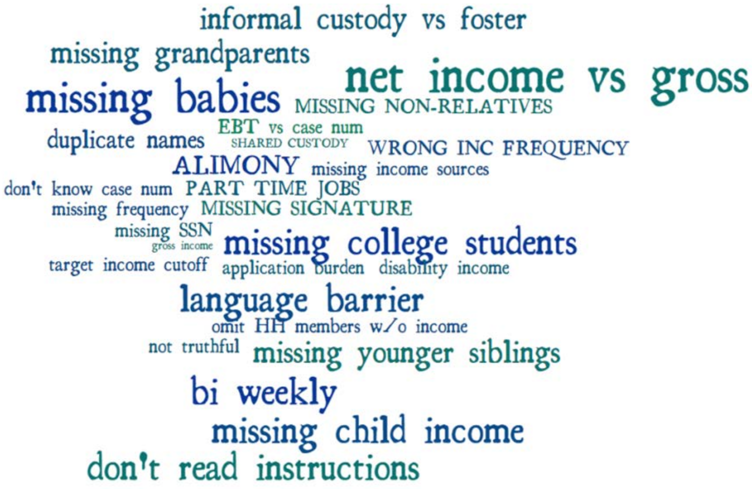

informal custody vs foster
missing grandparents
missing babies
net income vs gross
MISSING NON-RELATIVES
duplicate names
EBT vs case num
SHARED CUSTODY
WRONG INC FREQUENCY
ALIMONY
missing income sources
don't know case num
PART TIME JOBS
missing frequency
MISSING SIGNATURE
missing SSN
gross income
missing college students
target income cutoff
application burden
disability income
language barrier
omit HH members w/o income
not truthful
missing younger siblings
bi weekly
missing child income
don't read instructions

FIGURE 1.1 This **word cloud** shows some of the most common causes of household reporting error that have been encountered in research around the school meal programs.

FNS incorporated a number of features into the web-based prototype that research suggests may reduce these very types of household error. These include a structured interview to guide applicants through the process with greater certainty, user-tested design standards to improve readability and comprehension, integrated *Help* features to make finding answers as simple as possible, and validation checks to ensure accuracy and completeness.

The next several pages of this guide contain more about the APEC study, as well as some of the other research behind the prototype application, including the evidence-based U.S. Web Design Standards. Section 2 of the guide contains screen shots that illustrate the translation of that research into the design and functional features of the prototype application.

E.A.T. School Lunch UX Challenge

In December 2015, FNS launched the **E.A.T. School Lunch UX Challenge**, a public design and coding challenge that served as the first phase of development of the web-based prototype application. The contest was run under the authority of the **America COMPETES Act**, a model for public innovation and citizen science embraced by agencies throughout the Federal government.

Contest participants had three months to design, build, and test an application for the school meal programs. The rules made clear that submissions would be judged on elements that **promoted integrity without limiting eligible households' access to benefits**.

The contest was a success. Contestants built more than **40 fully functional applications**, and FNS awarded **$50,000** to the best entries (see below). The *creativity* and *innovation* of the designers and programmers that built applications was **inspiring**, and provided a strong foundation upon which FNS' prototype application was built.

More information about the contest, including full access to all submissions can be found at https://lunchux.devpost.com/.

winners • winners • winners • winners • winners • winners

First Prize

LunchLine by Lauren MacGuidwin, Cody Landstrom, Keaton Bedell, and Jessica Zhang

WINNER
LUNCHLINE

Second Prize

Reduced Lunch Form by Gavy Aggarwal and Abirami Kurinchi-Vendhan

WINNER
USDA
Reduced School Lunch Application

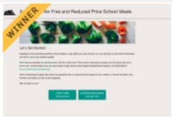
Third Prize

Eat School Lunch Submission by Emily McCammon and Justin McCammon

Honorable Mentions

Lunchbox by William Holley

E.A.T. School Lunch UX by Abijeet Kaulgud



eatChallenge by Kyle Warneck and Anne Paprocki

WINNER
School Meals Application

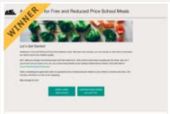
E.A.T School Lunch UX Challenge by Jon Tuttle

Project Almuerzo by Taylor Palmer

WINNER
LUNCHLINE

Best Creative Design Aesthetic

LunchLine (see left)



Best Technical Implementation

eatChallenge (see bottom left)

WINNER
LUNCHLINE

Best Behavioral Design Elements

LunchLine (see left)

WINNER
USDA
Reduced School Lunch Application

Student Award

Reduced Lunch Form (see left)

WINNER
Team Lunchbox

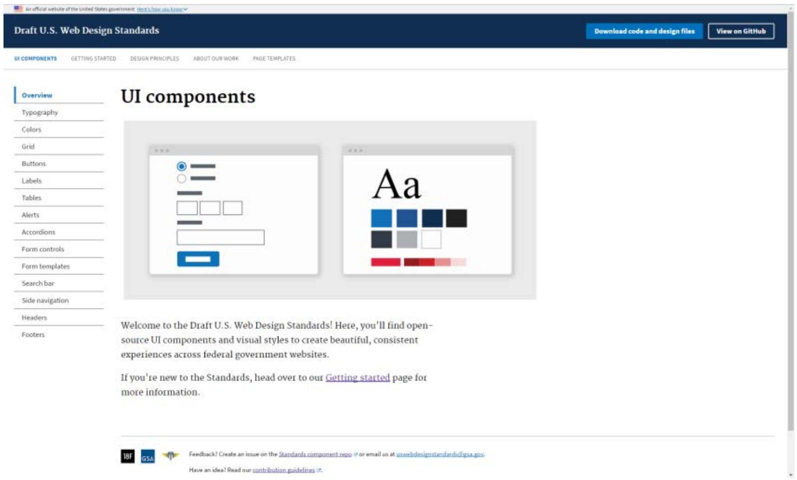
Popular Choice Award

Team Lunchbox – School Lunch Mobile-Responsive Web App by Cara Abel, Miriam Donath, Alexander Tran, Andy Hollenhorst, Eric Famiglietti, and Giselle Sperber

Large Organization Recognition Award

Project Oliver by Gravity Tank

U.S. Web Design Standards


An official website of the United States government Here's how you know
Draft U.S. Web Design Standards
Download code and design files
View on GitHub
UI COMPONENTS
GETTING STARTED
DESIGN PRINCIPLES
ABOUT OUR WORK
PAGE TEMPLATES
Overview
Typography
Colors
Grid
Buttons
Labels
Tables
Alerts
Accordions
Form controls
Form templates
Search bar
Side navigation
Headers
Footers
Aa
18F
GSA

UI components

Welcome to the Draft U.S. Web Design Standards! Here, you'll find open-source UI components and visual styles to create beautiful, consistent experiences across federal government websites.

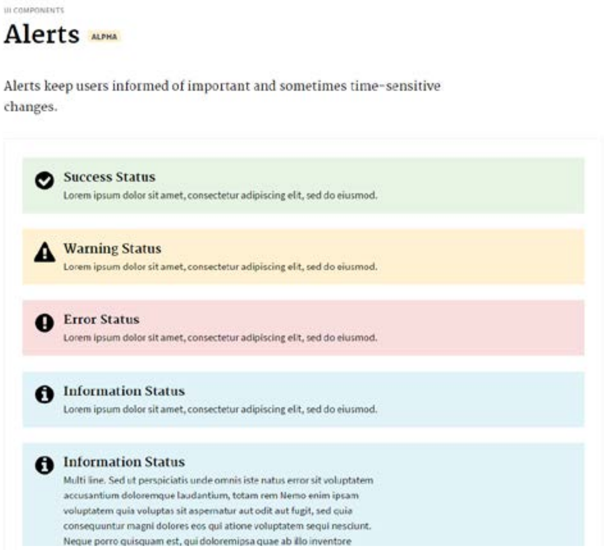
If you're new to the Standards, head over to our Getting started page for more information.

Feedback? Create an issue on the Standards component repo or email us at uswebdesignstandards@gsa.gov.

Have an idea? Read our contribution guidelines.

FIGURE 1.2 Screen capture of the U.S. Web Design Standards home screen. (UI stands for "user interface," i.e., what people see on the screen.)

In September 2015, The White House's U.S. Digital Service and 18F, part of the General Services Administration (GSA), released the U.S. Web Design Standards. In their own words, they "provide the plug-and-play design and code to help you set a new bar for simplicity and consistency across government services." The standards were created based on research and best-practices from both inside and outside the government, and were subsequently modified using a rapid, iterative development process that was informed by ongoing user testing and research. Everything from the typeface (font) to the color palette to the shape and size of buttons is meant to simplify users' interactions with a website. Better yet, all the design options meet the standards outlined in Section 508 of Title 36 in the Code of Federal Regulations to improve electronic and information technology accessibility by individuals with disabilities.


UI COMPONENTS
ALPHA

Alerts

Alerts keep users informed of important and sometimes time-sensitive changes.

Success Status
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod.

Warning Status
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod.

Error Status
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod.

Information Status
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod.

Information Status
Multi line. Sed ut perspiciatis unde omnis iste natus error sit voluptatem accusantium doloremque laudantium, totam rem Nemo enim ipsam voluptatem quia voluptas sit aspernatur aut odit aut fugit, sed quia consequuntur magni dolores eos qui atione voluptatem sequi nesciunt. Neque porro quisquam est, qui doloremipsa quae ab illo inventore

FIGURE 1.3 U.S. Web Design Standards options for Alerts. The *Warning Status* alert is used in the prototype application when applicants forget to include a source of income that they indicated they had on a previous page.

The best thing about the standards is that they are constantly being updated and improved by both government programmers and the public through an open-source, collaborative forum called GitHub. Since the different elements have been used and tested to varying extents, a "component maturity scale" is applied to each one so that developers can make informed decisions about which elements they want to include in their design. For more information about the standards, visit https://standards.usa.gov/.

Results from the Access, Participation, Eligibility, and Certification Study

FNS developed the *Access, Participation, Eligibility and Certification (APEC)* study series to collect and analyze data from a nationally representative sample of schools, school food authorities (SFAs), and household applicants for school meal benefits. APEC provides national estimates of program error rates and amounts in three key areas:

- ***Certification*** : when a child is placed in the wrong meal reimbursement category, such as when a child who should receive reduced-price meals is certified for free meals;
- ***Meal claiming*** : when meals are incorrectly categorized as reimbursable or non-reimbursable at the point of sale in the cafeteria, as when a required meal component, such as a carton of milk or a piece of fruit, is missing but the meal is counted as reimbursable; and
- ***Aggregation***: when a school or SFA tallies the number of reimbursable meals incorrectly and thus makes an error in the number of meals submitted for Federal reimbursement.

The APEC I study, which collected data in School Year 2005-2006, found significant levels of program error in each of these three categories. In response, FNS and its State agency partners invested in system improvements and process reforms to deliver long-term reductions in error rates. APEC II, which collected data in School Year 2012-2013, showed improvement in certain types of errors, particularly in the aggregation of meal counts for reimbursement. But meal claiming error and certification error remain high.

The APEC studies are designed primarily to *measure* program error, but they are also designed to shed light on the nature and causes of that error. The studies gather data through methods that include on-site observation of program operations, review of school district records, surveys of program administrators, and interviews with parents who applied for free or reduced-price meal benefits.

The APEC studies found that certification error, the focus of FNS' web-based application project, is driven by mistakes at both the school district and applicant levels. But they also confirm that applicant error is, by far, the more significant source.

APEC points to errors of omission – of both household members and income types – as critical sources of applicant error. This finding is consistent with feedback from school district officials and suggests that targeted improvements in application design can play a part in error reduction.

Section

2

Applied design: Features & functional elements

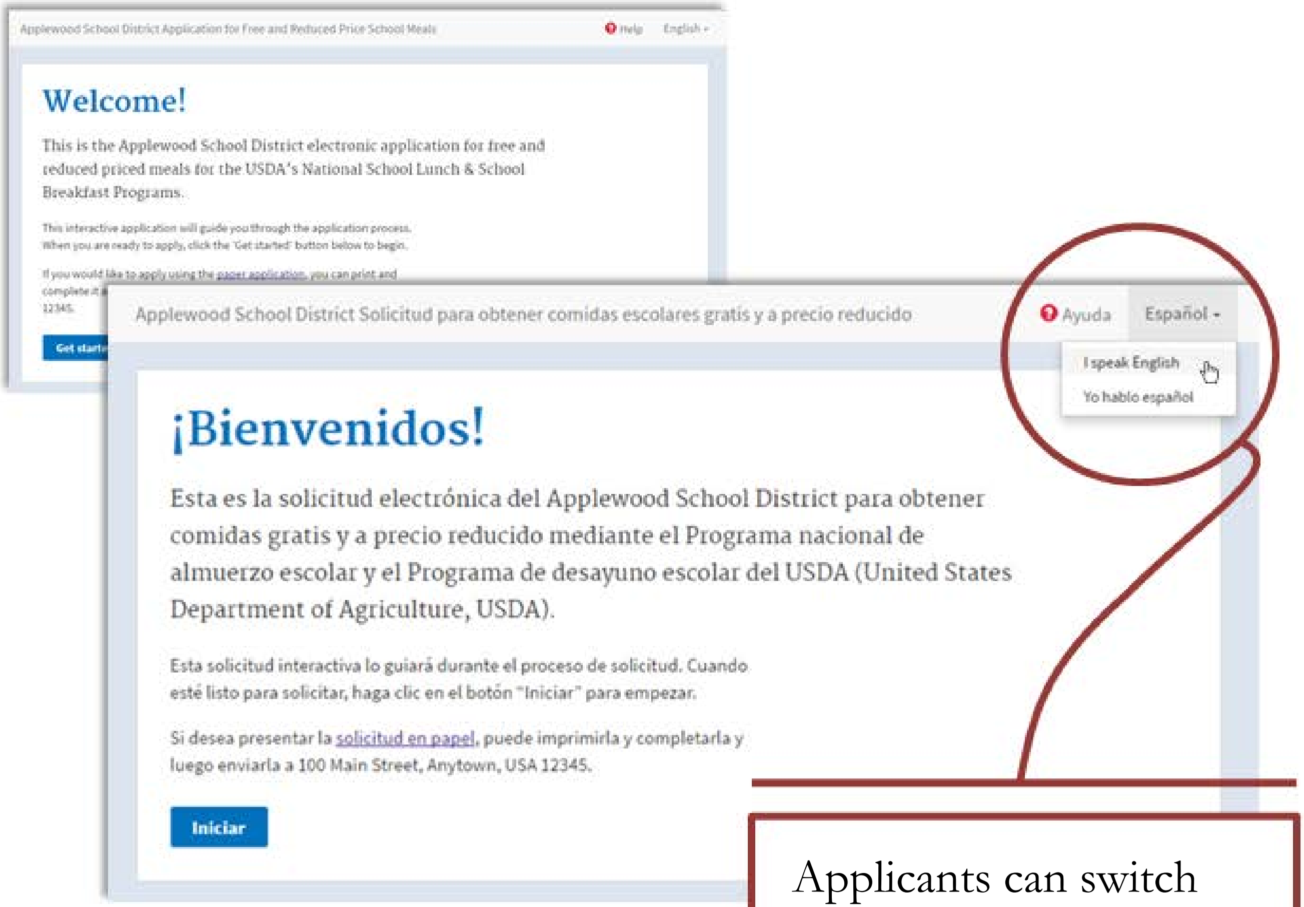
The translation of research to practice.

Walk through the features and functional elements of the prototype application in this section of the guide. Screen shots are annotated with dark red shapes and figures to clearly highlight the specific elements. Click on the links below to quickly navigate to a specific element, or go through them in order to get the complete landscape.

Instant translation
Detailed on-screen instructions
Pop-up and slide-out help
Guided income interview
Positive confirmation – no default responses
Discrete income reporting
New income frequency options
Sign up front
Smart progress bar
Detailed explanation of gross vs. net income
Things you'll need list
Distinct sections for students and 'other kids'
Submit more than one case number
Informed choice
Paired typeface
Dynamic grid layout
User-friendly buttons
Informational alerts

Instant translation

The ability for households to apply for school meals in the language that they are most comfortable with is an important access and integrity issue. While the web-based prototype will be offered in additional languages in the future, v1.0 contains English and Spanish, and the paper prototype is offered in 49 different languages, available for download from the FNS website.


Applewood School District Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals
Help
English

Welcome!

This is the Applewood School District electronic application for free and reduced priced meals for the USDA's National School Lunch & School Breakfast Programs.

This interactive application will guide you through the application process. When you are ready to apply, click the 'Get started' button below to begin.

If you would like to apply using the paper application, you can print and complete it a
12345.

Get starte
Applewood School District Solicitud para obtener comidas escolares gratis y a precio reducido
Ayuda
Español
I speak English
Yo hablo español

¡Bienvenidos!

Esta es la solicitud electrónica del Applewood School District para obtener comidas gratis y a precio reducido mediante el Programa nacional de almuerzo escolar y el Programa de desayuno escolar del USDA (United States Department of Agriculture, USDA).

Esta solicitud interactiva lo guiará durante el proceso de solicitud. Cuando esté listo para solicitar, haga clic en el botón "Iniciar" para empezar.

Si desea presentar la solicitud en papel, puede imprimirla y completarla y luego enviarla a 100 Main Street, Anytown, USA 12345.

Applicants can switch back and forth between languages by simply clicking on the language drop-down menu and selecting the "I speak…" statement that applies to them.

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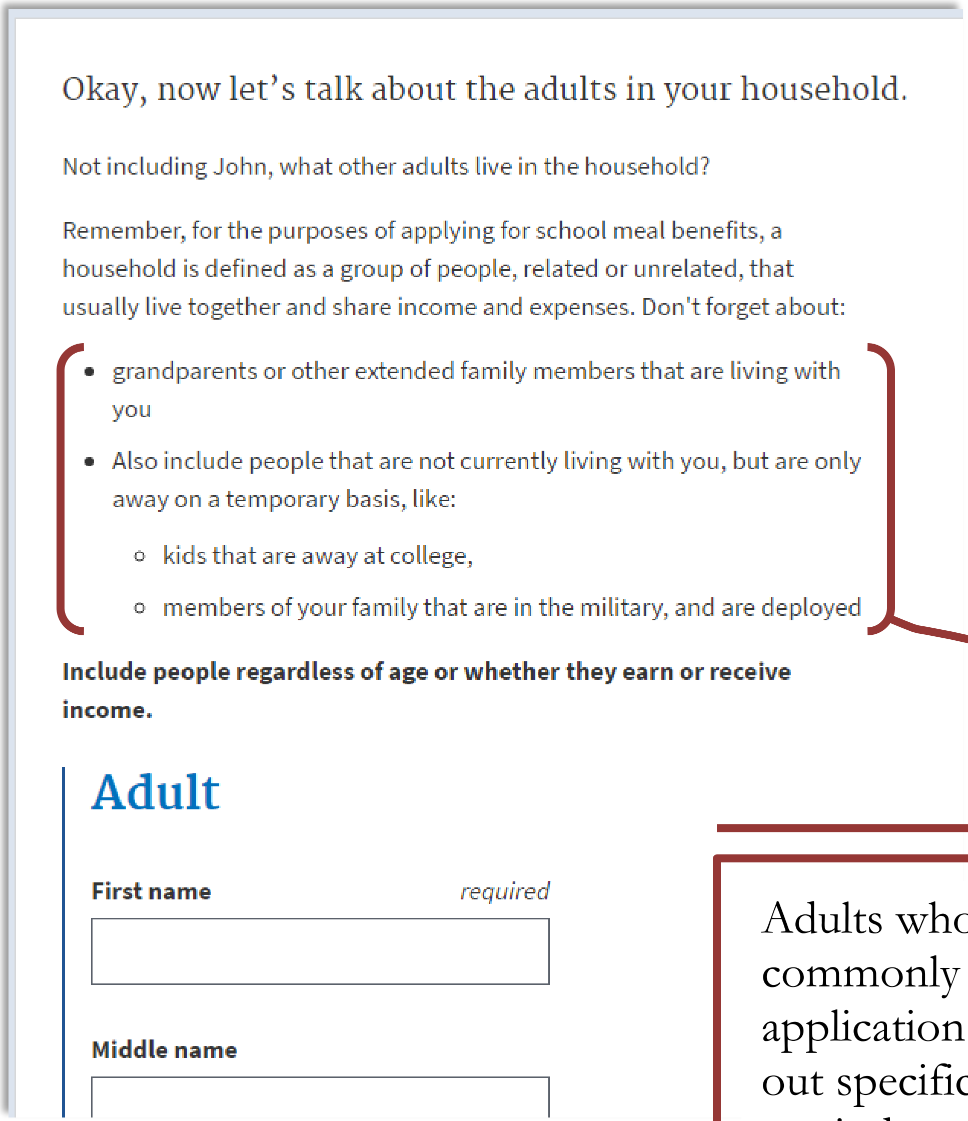
Detailed on-screen instructions

APEC found that one of the most common household reporting errors was missing household members. This is a leading cause of both over-certification and mistaken denial of program benefits.



Okay, now let's talk about the adults in your household.

Not including John, what other adults live in the household?

Remember, for the purposes of applying for school meal benefits, a household is defined as a group of people, related or unrelated, that usually live together and share income and expenses. Don't forget about:

- grandparents or other extended family members that are living with you
- Also include people that are not currently living with you, but are only away on a temporary basis, like:
  - kids that are away at college,
  - members of your family that are in the military, and are deployed

Include people regardless of age or whether they earn or receive income.

Adult

First name *required*

Middle name

Adults who are commonly left off applications are called out specifically as a reminder to include them in the application.

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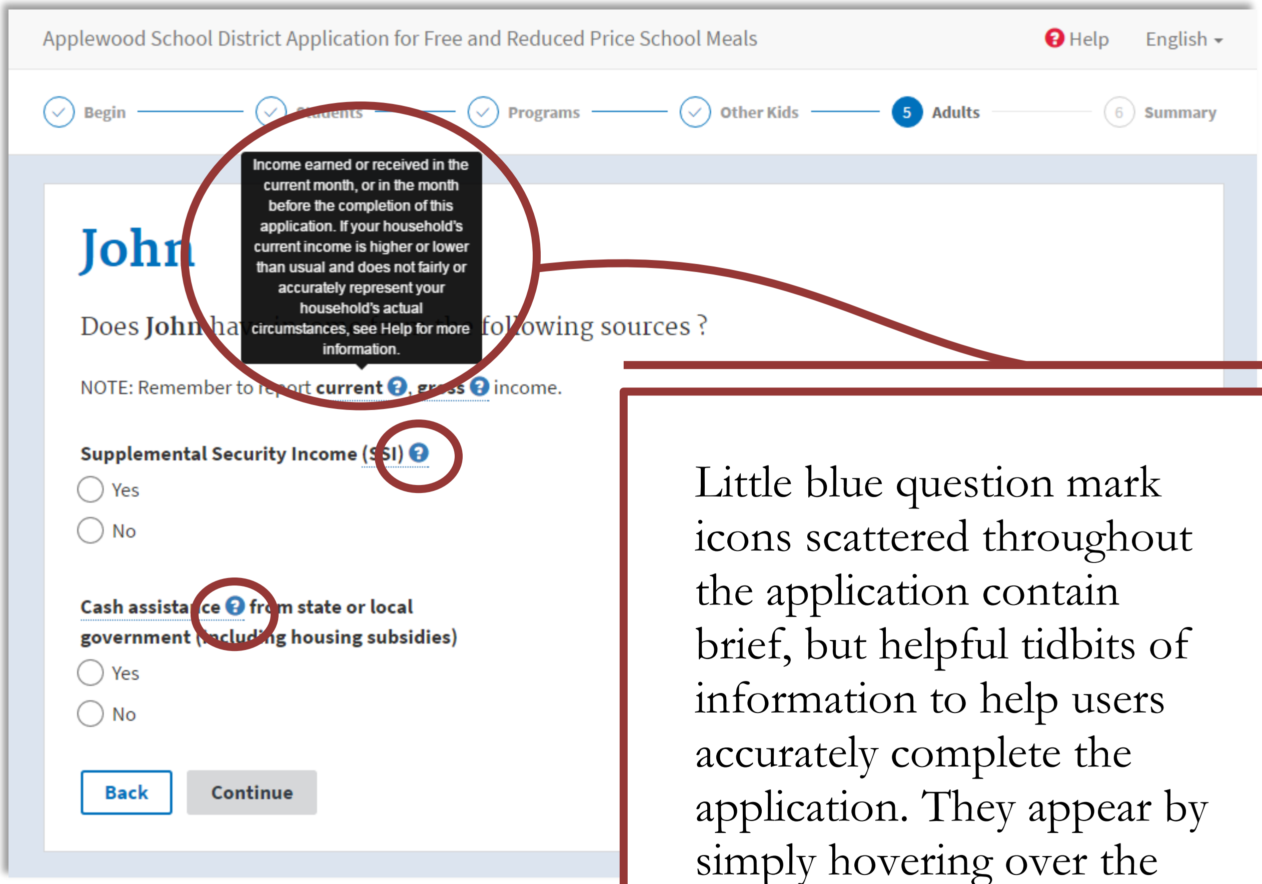
Pop-up and slide-out help

Failure to read instructions is a well-known human behavior, and under the constraints of a paper format some critical information will end up in a separate document, making it even less likely that anyone will read it. In the prototype application, additional information is right at users' fingertips.



Applewood School District Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals

Income earned or received in the current month, or in the month before the completion of this application. If your household's current income is higher or lower than usual and does not fairly or accurately represent your household's actual circumstances, see Help for more information.

John

Does John ha following sources ?

NOTE: Remember to report **current** ?, **gross** ? income.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) ?

○ Yes

○ No

Cash assistance ? from state or local government (including housing subsidies)

○ Yes

○ No

Little blue question mark icons scattered throughout the application contain brief, but helpful tidbits of information to help users accurately complete the application. They appear by simply hovering over the word or icon with the mouse.

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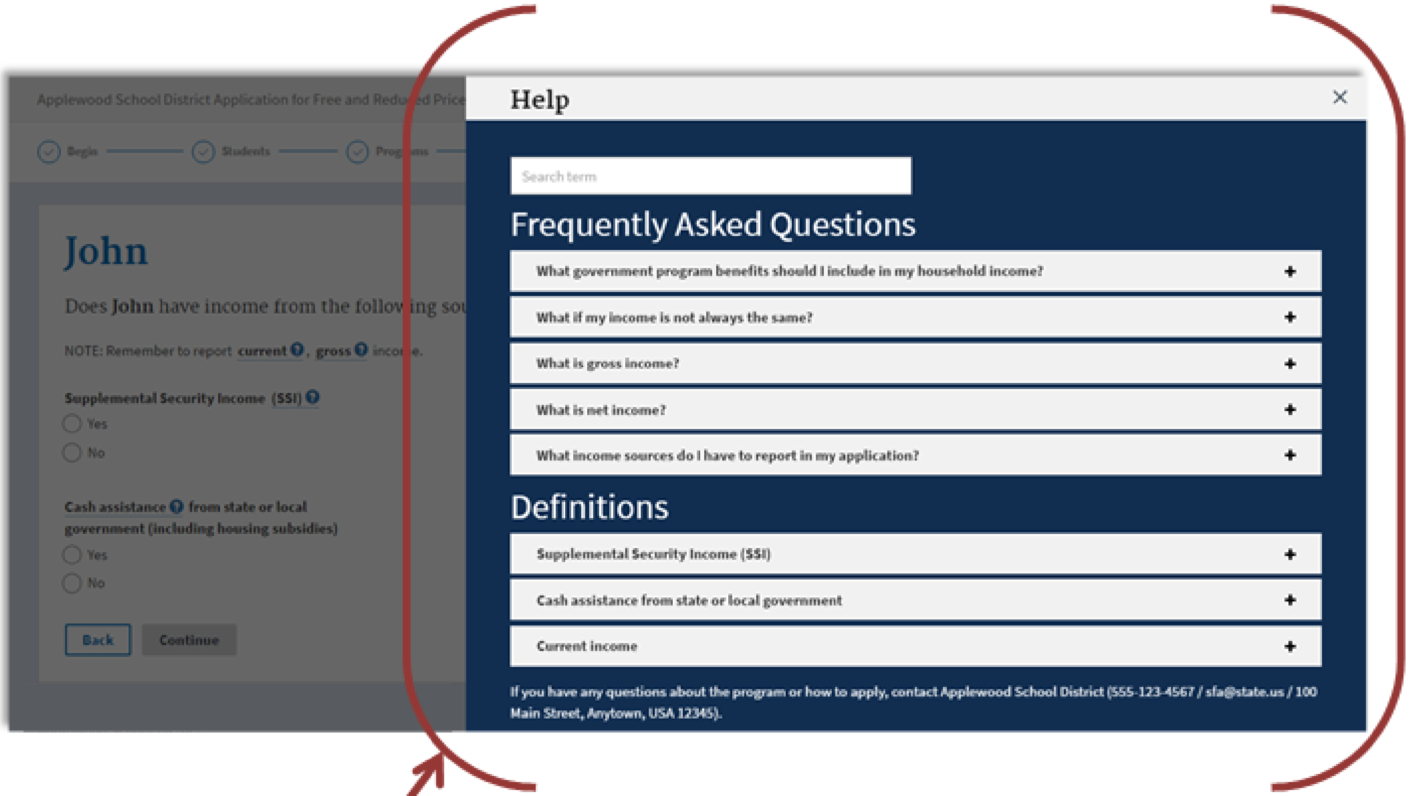
Pop-up and slide-out help, continued



Applewood School District Application for Free and Reduced Price
Begin
Students
Programs
Back
Continue
Help
×
Search term

John

Does John have income from the following sou

NOTE: Remember to report current, gross income.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
○ Yes
○ No

Cash assistance from state or local government (including housing subsidies)
○ Yes
○ No

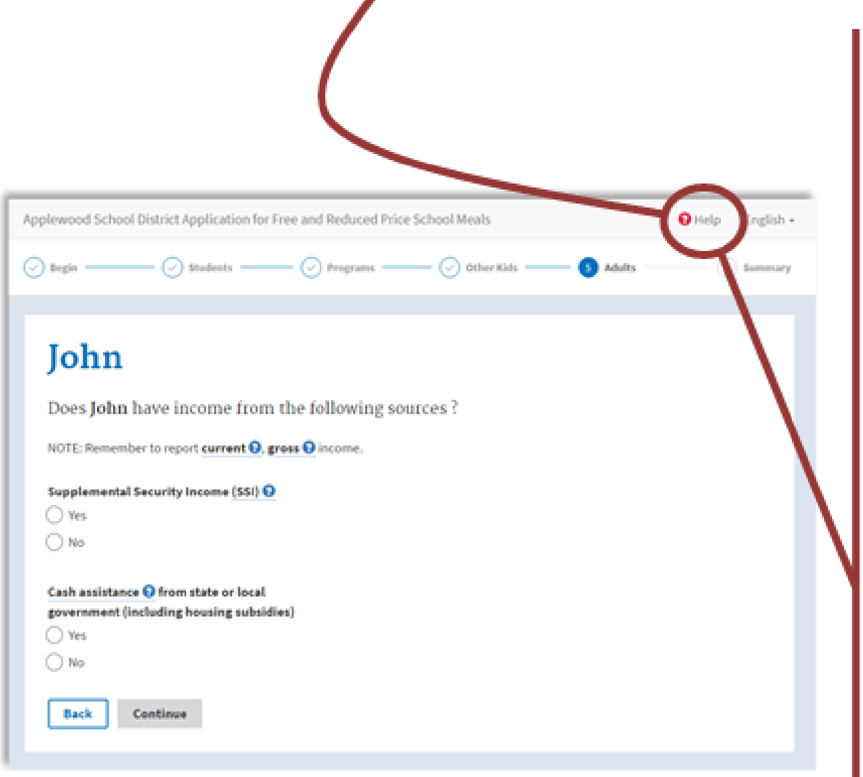
Frequently Asked Questions

- What government program benefits should I include in my household income? +
- What if my income is not always the same? +
- What is gross income? +
- What is net income? +
- What income sources do I have to report in my application? +

Definitions

- Supplemental Security Income (SSI) +
- Cash assistance from state or local government +
- Current income +

If you have any questions about the program or how to apply, contact Applewood School District (555-123-4567 / sfa@state.us / 100 Main Street, Anytown, USA 12345).



Applewood School District Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals
Help
English
Begin
Students
Programs
Other Kids
5
Adults
Summary
Back
Continue

John

Does John have income from the following sources ?

NOTE: Remember to report current, gross income.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
○ Yes
○ No

Cash assistance from state or local government (including housing subsidies)
○ Yes
○ No

Clicking *Help* on the header opens a side bar on the right side of the screen with "FAQs" and "Definitions" relevant to the questions on the screen, but *all* help content is available at any time by using the *search bar.*

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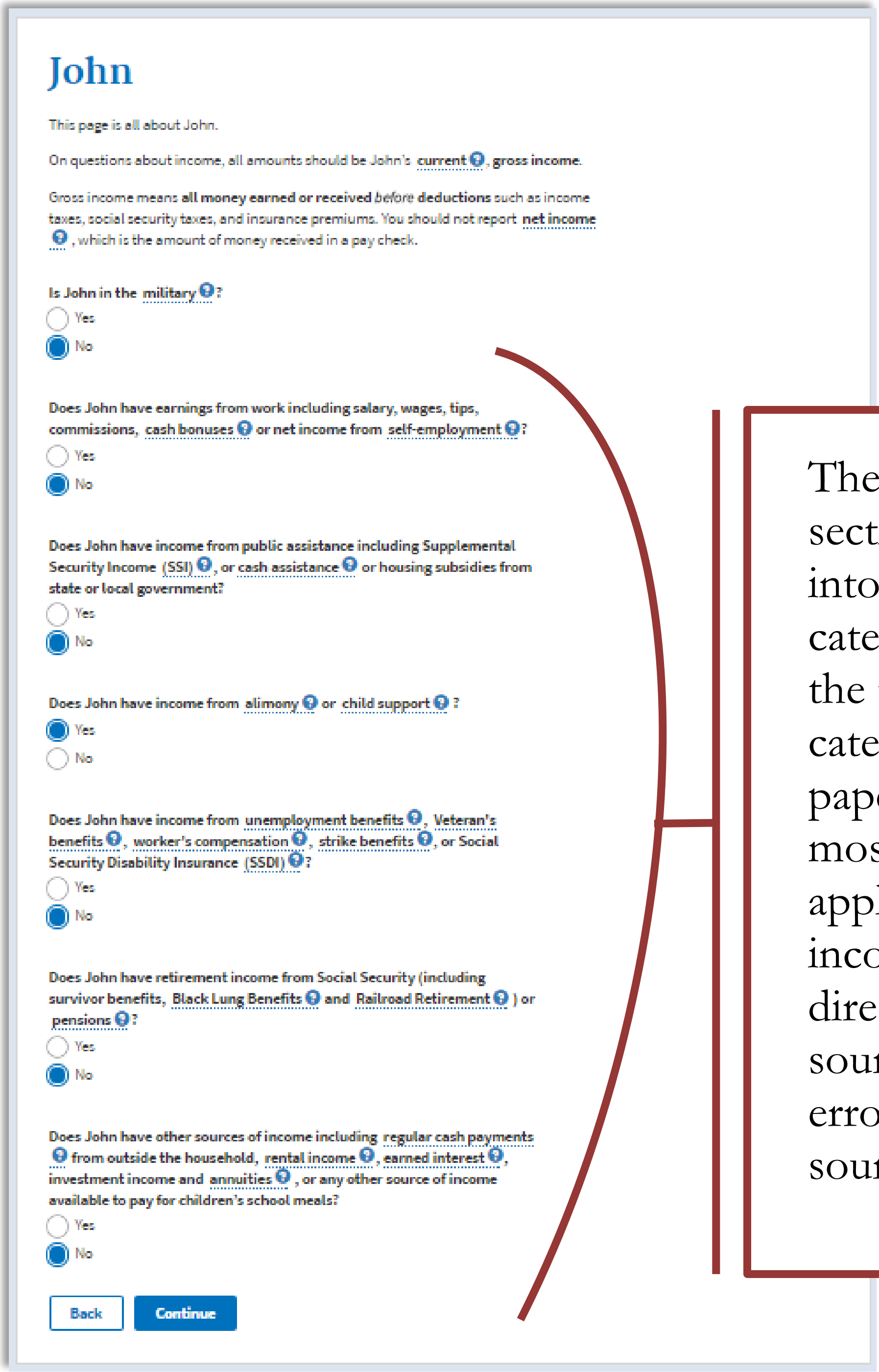
Guided income "interview"

Taking a cue from tax preparation software, the prototype prompts applicants with a straightforward series of questions about household income. FNS understands that applicants have better things to do than master school meal eligibility rules, so questions are fully descriptive, and proper terms are documented with popup definitions.



John

This page is all about John.

On questions about income, all amounts should be John's current, **gross income**.

Gross income means **all money earned or received** *before* **deductions** such as income taxes, social security taxes, and insurance premiums. You should not report **net income**, which is the amount of money received in a pay check.

Is John in the military?

○ Yes
● No

Does John have earnings from work including salary, wages, tips, commissions, cash bonuses or net income from self-employment?

○ Yes
● No

Does John have income from public assistance including Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or cash assistance or housing subsidies from state or local government?

○ Yes
● No

Does John have income from alimony or child support ?

● Yes
○ No

Does John have income from unemployment benefits, Veteran's benefits, worker's compensation, strike benefits, or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)?

○ Yes
● No

Does John have retirement income from Social Security (including survivor benefits, Black Lung Benefits and Railroad Retirement) or pensions?

○ Yes
● No

Does John have other sources of income including regular cash payments from outside the household, rental income, earned interest, investment income and annuities, or any other source of income available to pay for children's school meals?

○ Yes
● No

The adult income section is broken down into six descriptive categories, instead of the three broad categories used on the paper prototype and most of today's online applications. This income interview takes direct aim at a major source of applicant error – omitted income sources.

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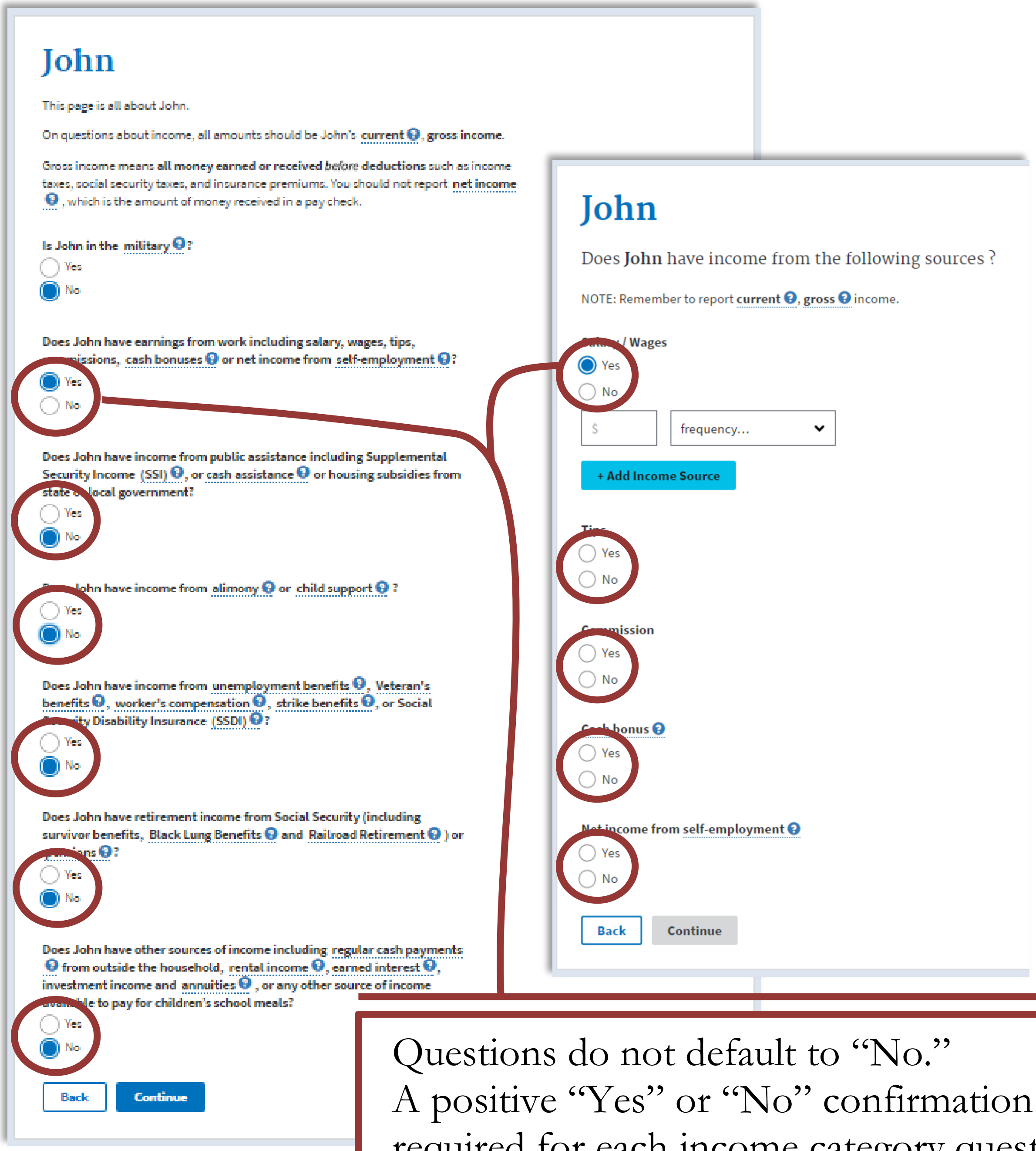
Positive confirmation – no default responses

The income interview tries to simplify the task of complete and accurate reporting by presenting the applicant with direct, well-documented questions. In return, the application puts responsibility on the applicant to read and respond to those questions.



John

This page is all about John.

On questions about income, all amounts should be John's current ?, gross income.

Gross income means **all money earned or received** *before* **deductions** such as income taxes, social security taxes, and insurance premiums. You should not report **net income** ?, which is the amount of money received in a pay check.

Is John in the military ??
○ Yes
● No

Does John have earnings from work including salary, wages, tips, commissions, cash bonuses ? or net income from self-employment ??
● Yes
○ No

Does John have income from public assistance including Supplemental Security Income (SSI) ?, or cash assistance ? or housing subsidies from state or local government?
○ Yes
● No

Does John have income from alimony ? or child support ? ?
○ Yes
● No

Does John have income from unemployment benefits ?, Veteran's benefits ?, worker's compensation ?, strike benefits ?, or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) ??
○ Yes
● No

Does John have retirement income from Social Security (including survivor benefits, Black Lung Benefits ? and Railroad Retirement ?) or pensions ??
○ Yes
● No

Does John have other sources of income including regular cash payments ? from outside the household, rental income ?, earned interest ?, investment income and annuities ? , or any other source of income available to pay for children's school meals?
○ Yes
● No

John

Does **John** have income from the following sources ?

NOTE: Remember to report **current ?**, **gross ?** income.

Salary / Wages
● Yes
○ No
$ | frequency...

Tips
○ Yes
○ No

Commission
○ Yes
○ No

Cash bonus ?
○ Yes
○ No

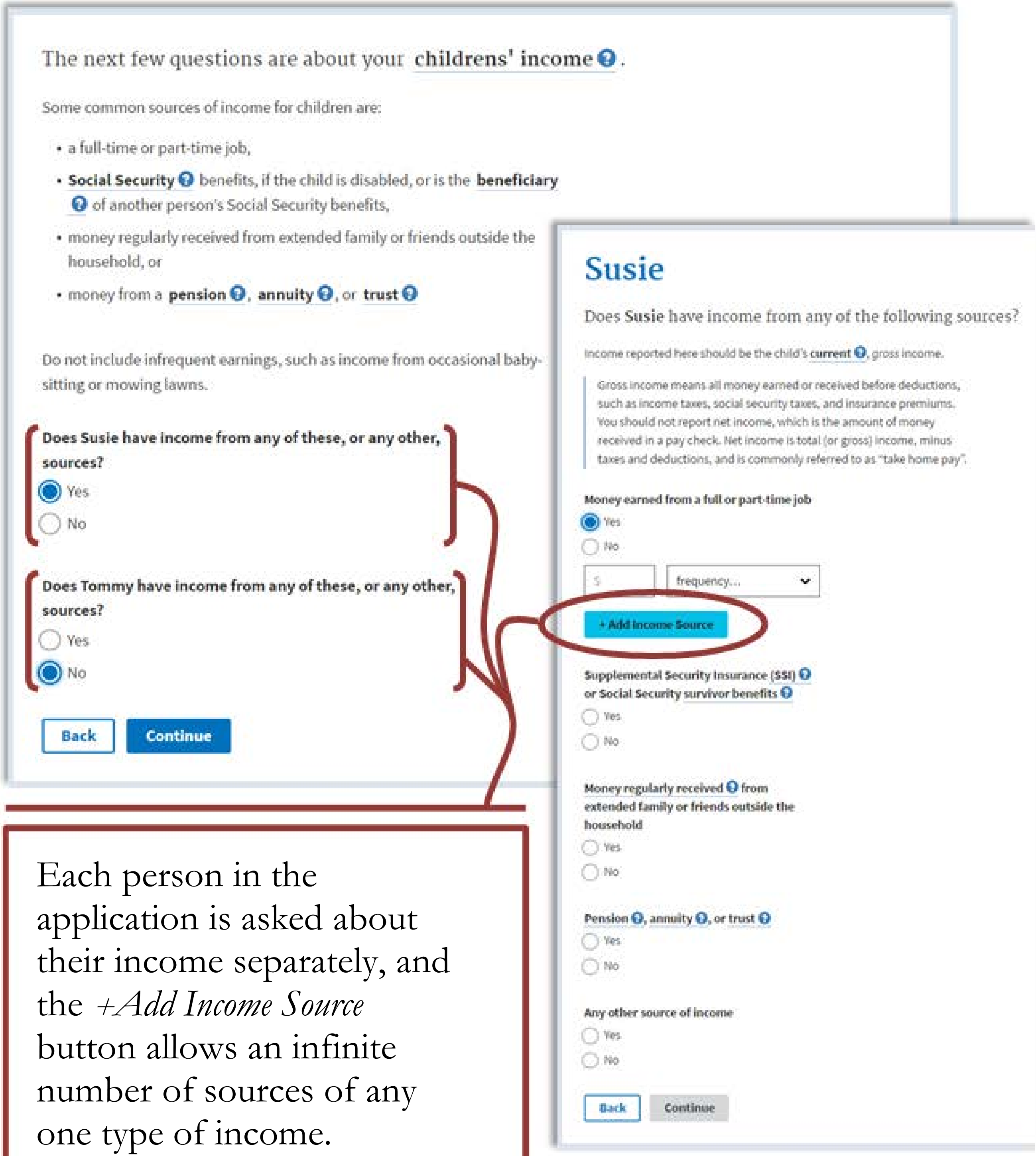
Net income from self-employment ?
○ Yes
○ No

Questions do not default to "No."
A positive "Yes" or "No" confirmation is required for each income category question, as well as for the individual income sources if the applicant selects "Yes" to a category.

Back to top of Section 2

Discrete income reporting

Eliminating combined fields for multiple household members and multiple sources of income relieves applicants of the need to do their own math, reducing the risk of reporting error.



The next few questions are about your **childrens' income**.

Some common sources of income for children are:

- a full-time or part-time job,
- **Social Security** benefits, if the child is disabled, or is the **beneficiary** of another person's Social Security benefits,
- money regularly received from extended family or friends outside the household, or
- money from a **pension**, **annuity**, or **trust**

Do not include infrequent earnings, such as income from occasional baby-sitting or mowing lawns.

Does Susie have income from any of these, or any other, sources?

● Yes
○ No

Does Tommy have income from any of these, or any other, sources?

○ Yes
● No

Susie

Does **Susie** have income from any of the following sources?

Income reported here should be the child's **current**, gross income.

> Gross income means all money earned or received before deductions, such as income taxes, social security taxes, and insurance premiums. You should not report net income, which is the amount of money received in a pay check. Net income is total (or gross) income, minus taxes and deductions, and is commonly referred to as "take home pay".

Money earned from a full or part-time job

● Yes
○ No

$ | frequency...

Supplemental Security Insurance (SSI) or Social Security survivor benefits

○ Yes
○ No

Money regularly received from extended family or friends outside the household

○ Yes
○ No

Pension, annuity, or trust

○ Yes
○ No

Any other source of income

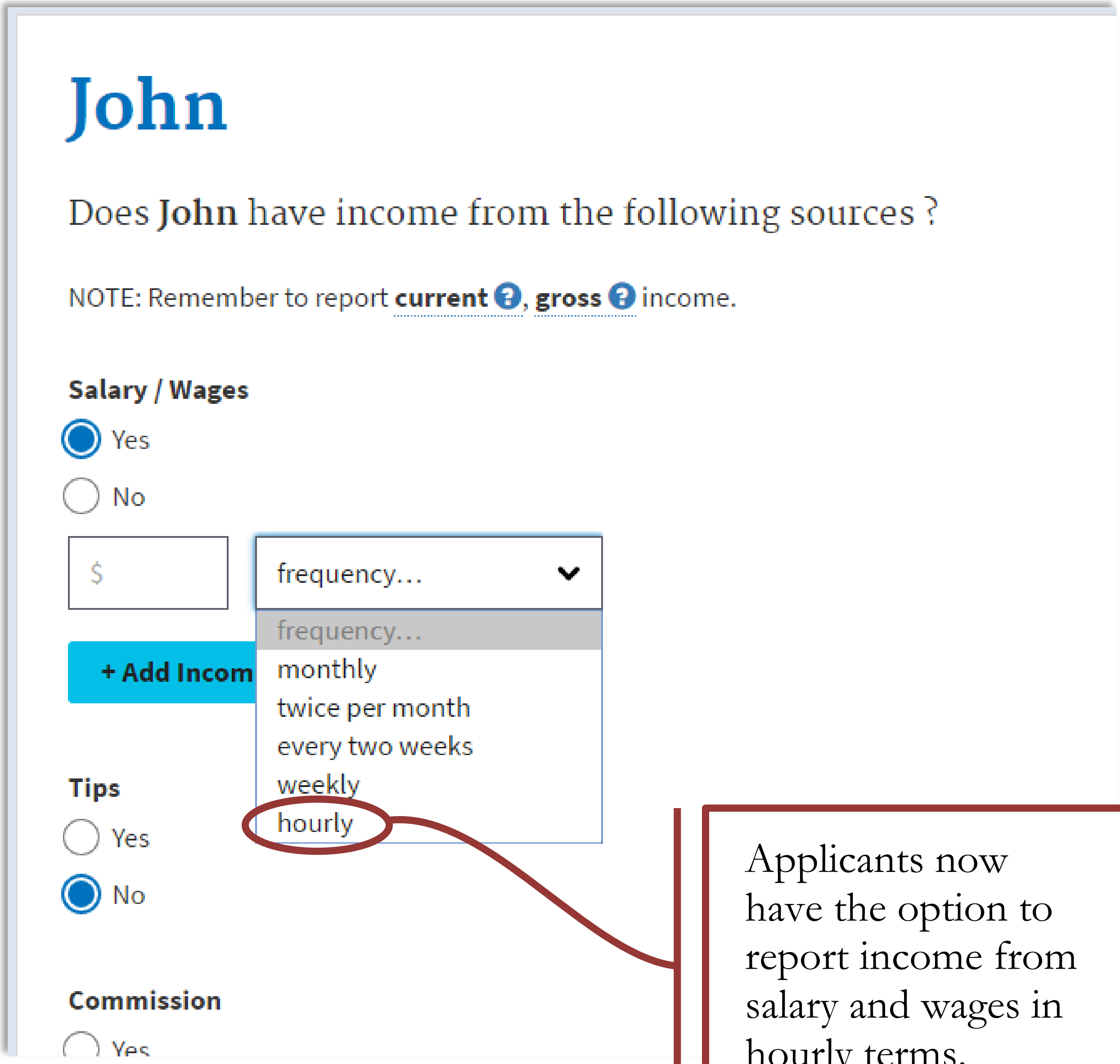
○ Yes
○ No

Each person in the application is asked about their income separately, and the *+Add Income Source* button allows an infinite number of sources of any one type of income.

[Back to top of Section 2](#)

New income frequency option

For many workers, the easiest and most appropriate way to report wage or salary income is in terms of an hourly wage. Additionally, hourly income is typically expressed in gross amounts, which is how income is required to be reported in applications for school meals.



John

Does **John** have income from the following sources ?

NOTE: Remember to report **current**, **gross** income.

Salary / Wages
● Yes
○ No

$
frequency…
frequency…
monthly
twice per month
every two weeks
weekly
hourly
+ Add Incom

Tips
○ Yes
● No

Commission
○ Yes

Applicants now have the option to report income from salary and wages in hourly terms.

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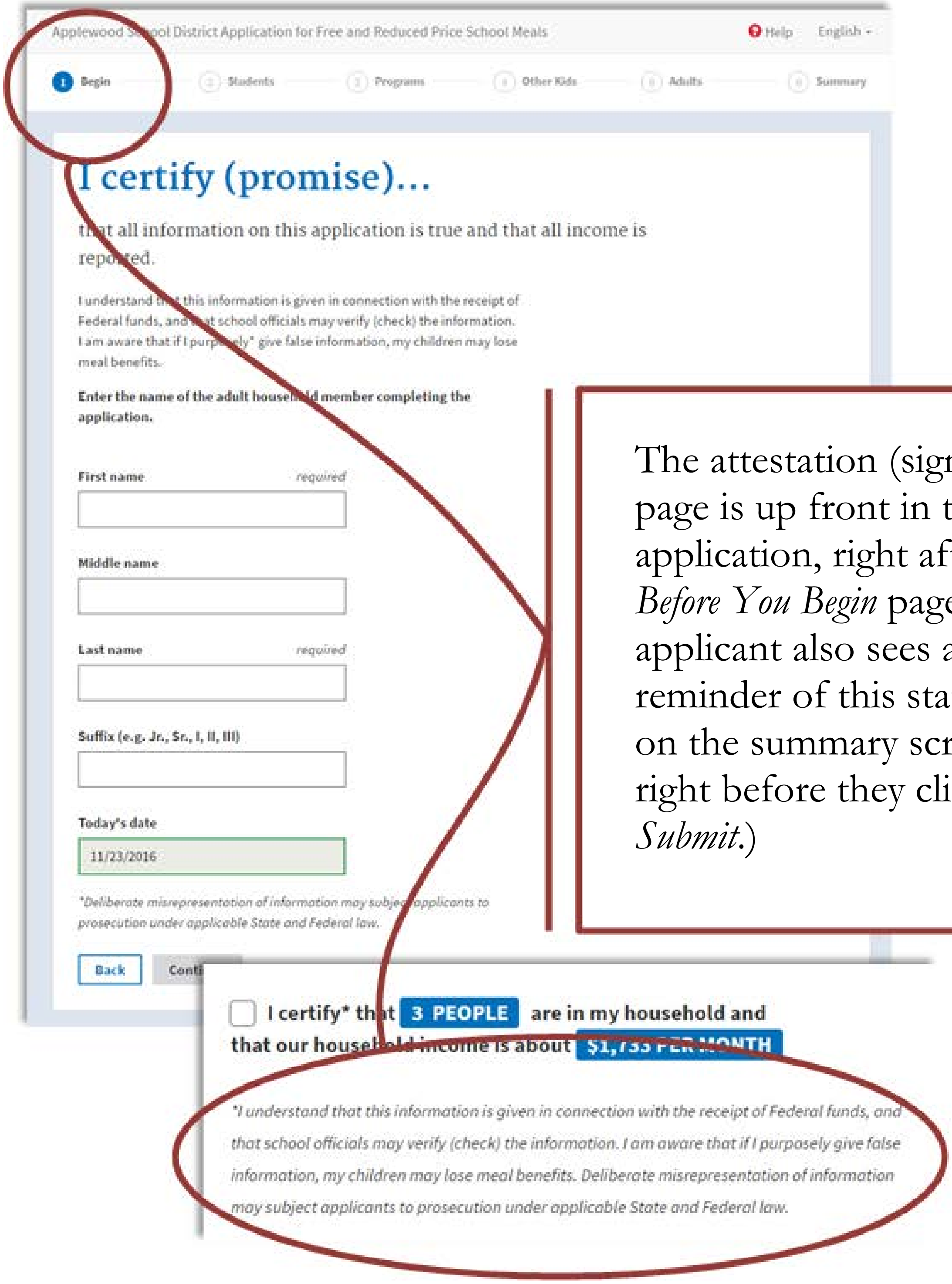
Sign up front

Research by social scientists finds that requiring users to sign up front, attesting to the accuracy of their information *before* reporting, reduces self-reporting errors.



Applewood School District Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals
Help
English
1 Begin
2 Students
3 Programs
4 Other Kids
5 Adults
6 Summary

I certify (promise)…

that all information on this application is true and that all income is reported.

I understand that this information is given in connection with the receipt of Federal funds, and that school officials may verify (check) the information. I am aware that if I purposely* give false information, my children may lose meal benefits.

Enter the name of the adult household member completing the application.

First name *required*

Middle name

Last name *required*

Suffix (e.g. Jr., Sr., I, II, III)

Today's date
11/23/2016

Deliberate misrepresentation of information may subject applicants to prosecution under applicable State and Federal law.

☐ **I certify* that 3 PEOPLE are in my household and that our household income is about $1,733 PER MONTH**

**I understand that this information is given in connection with the receipt of Federal funds, and that school officials may verify (check) the information. I am aware that if I purposely give false information, my children may lose meal benefits. Deliberate misrepresentation of information may subject applicants to prosecution under applicable State and Federal law.*

The attestation (signature) page is up front in the application, right after the *Before You Begin* page. (The applicant also sees a reminder of this statement on the summary screen, right before they click *Submit*.)

Lisa L. Shu, Nina Mazar, Francesca Gino, Dan Ariely, and Max H. Bazerman, "Signing at the Beginning Makes Ethics Salient and Decreases Dishonest SelfReports in Comparison to Signing at the End," Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences 109 (2012): 15197–15200.

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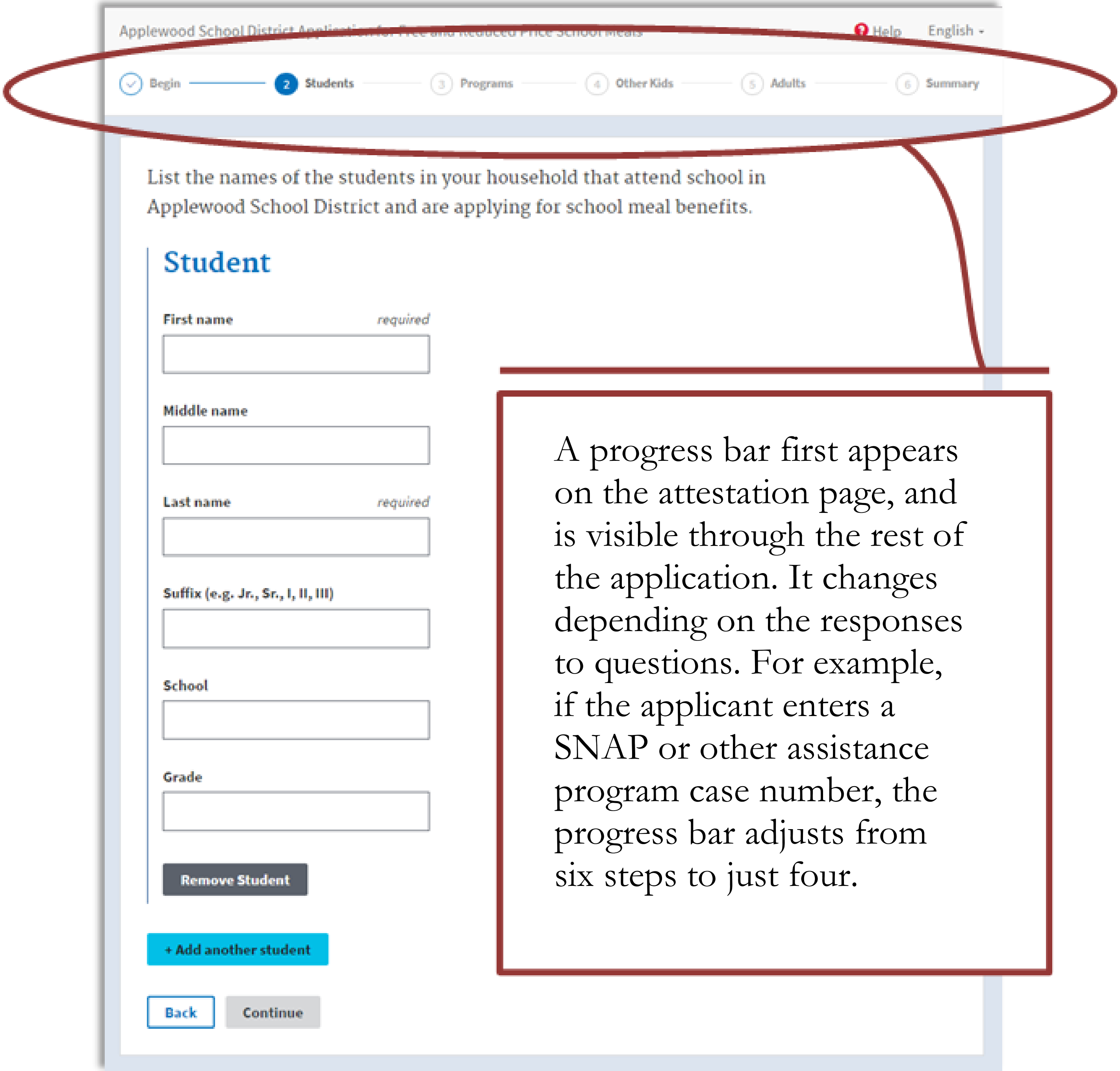
Smart progress bar

When applying through an online application, users are not able to gauge up front the amount of time or effort it will take to complete. A visual representation of the applicant moving through the application, in the form of this "smart" progress bar, increases the likelihood that they will complete the application, according to the social science theory called the *endowed progress effect.*



Applewood School District Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals
Help
English
Begin
2 Students
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4 Other Kids
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6 Summary

List the names of the students in your household that attend school in Applewood School District and are applying for school meal benefits.

Student

First name *required*

Middle name

Last name *required*

Suffix (e.g. Jr., Sr., I, II, III)

School

Grade

Remove Student
+ Add another student
Back
Continue

A progress bar first appears on the attestation page, and is visible through the rest of the application. It changes depending on the responses to questions. For example, if the applicant enters a SNAP or other assistance program case number, the progress bar adjusts from six steps to just four.

Nunes, J., Drèze, X., & [Dawn Iacobucci served as editor and Stephen Nowlis served as associate editor for this article.]. (2006). The Endowed Progress Effect: How Artificial Advancement Increases Effort. *Journal of Consumer Research, 32*(4), 504-512.

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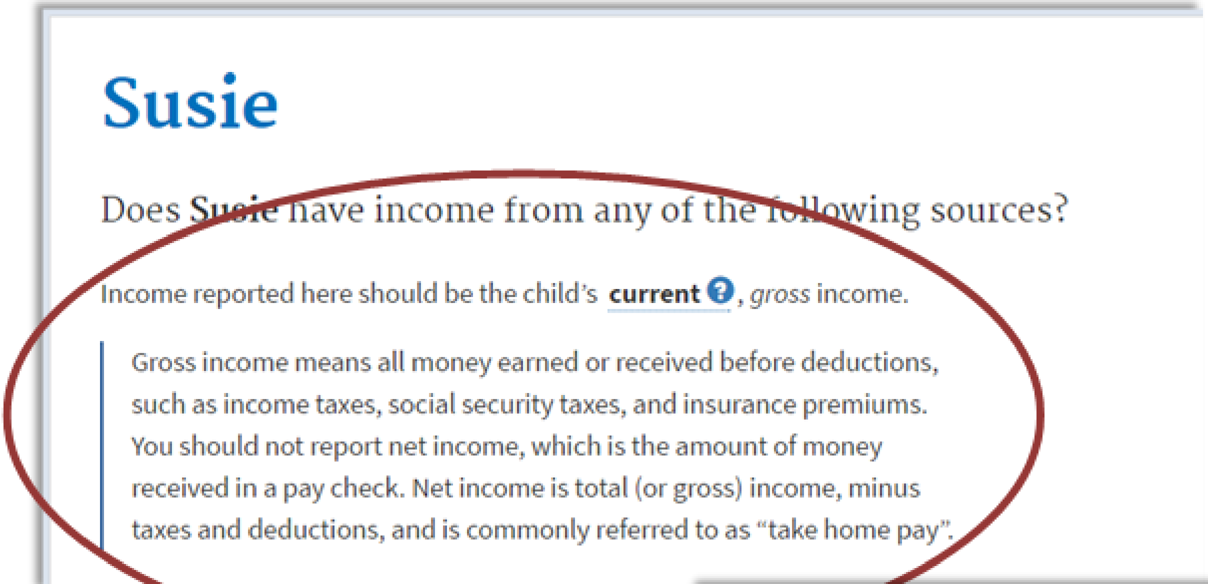
Detailed explanation of gross vs. net income

Many people are confused about the differences between gross and net income.

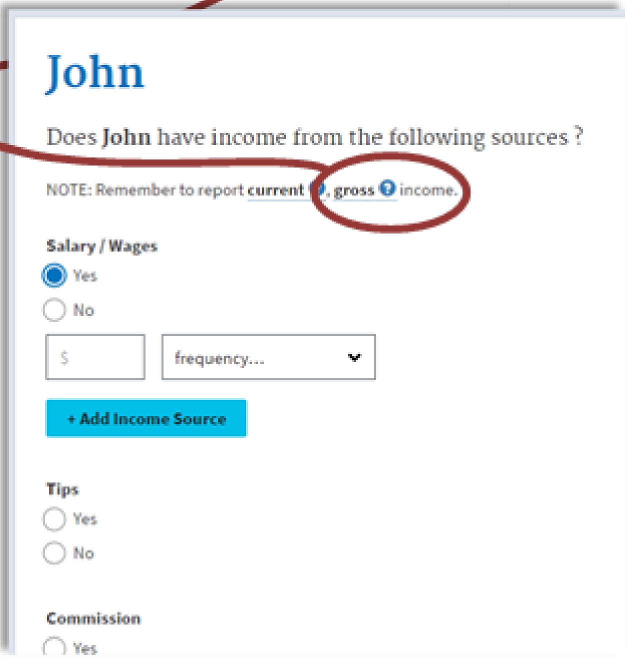


Susie

Does Susie have income from any of the following sources?

Income reported here should be the child's **current** ?, *gross* income.

> Gross income means all money earned or received before deductions, such as income taxes, social security taxes, and insurance premiums. You should not report net income, which is the amount of money received in a pay check. Net income is total (or gross) income, minus taxes and deductions, and is commonly referred to as "take home pay".



John

Does John have income from the following sources ?

NOTE: Remember to report **current** ?, **gross** ? income.

Salary / Wages
● Yes
○ No

Tips
○ Yes
○ No

Commission
○ Yes

A detailed description of gross versus net income appears at the top of the first income screen that the applicant sees. On all subsequent income screens, the information is available in a tooltip on the word "gross."

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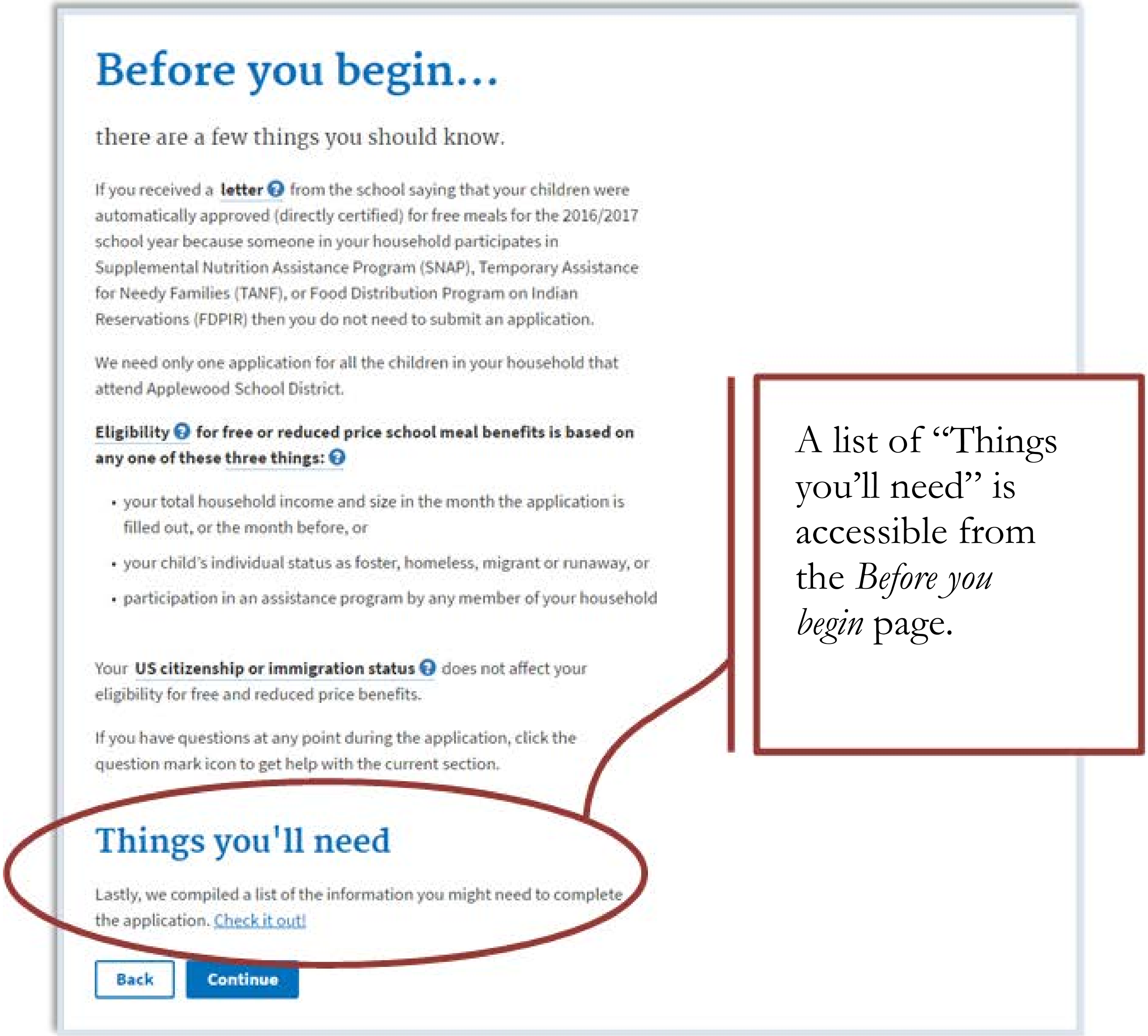
Things you'll need list

Providing accurate information may be simpler when applicants have ready access to reference documents such as benefits statements or paystubs. Alerting them to that possibility up front may make the application process smoother.



Before you begin…

there are a few things you should know.

If you received a **letter** from the school saying that your children were automatically approved (directly certified) for free meals for the 2016/2017 school year because someone in your household participates in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) then you do not need to submit an application.

We need only one application for all the children in your household that attend Applewood School District.

Eligibility for free or reduced price school meal benefits is based on any one of these three things:

- your total household income and size in the month the application is filled out, or the month before, or
- your child's individual status as foster, homeless, migrant or runaway, or
- participation in an assistance program by any member of your household

Your **US citizenship or immigration status** does not affect your eligibility for free and reduced price benefits.

If you have questions at any point during the application, click the question mark icon to get help with the current section.

Things you'll need

Lastly, we compiled a list of the information you might need to complete the application. Check it out!

A list of "Things you'll need" is accessible from the *Before you begin* page.

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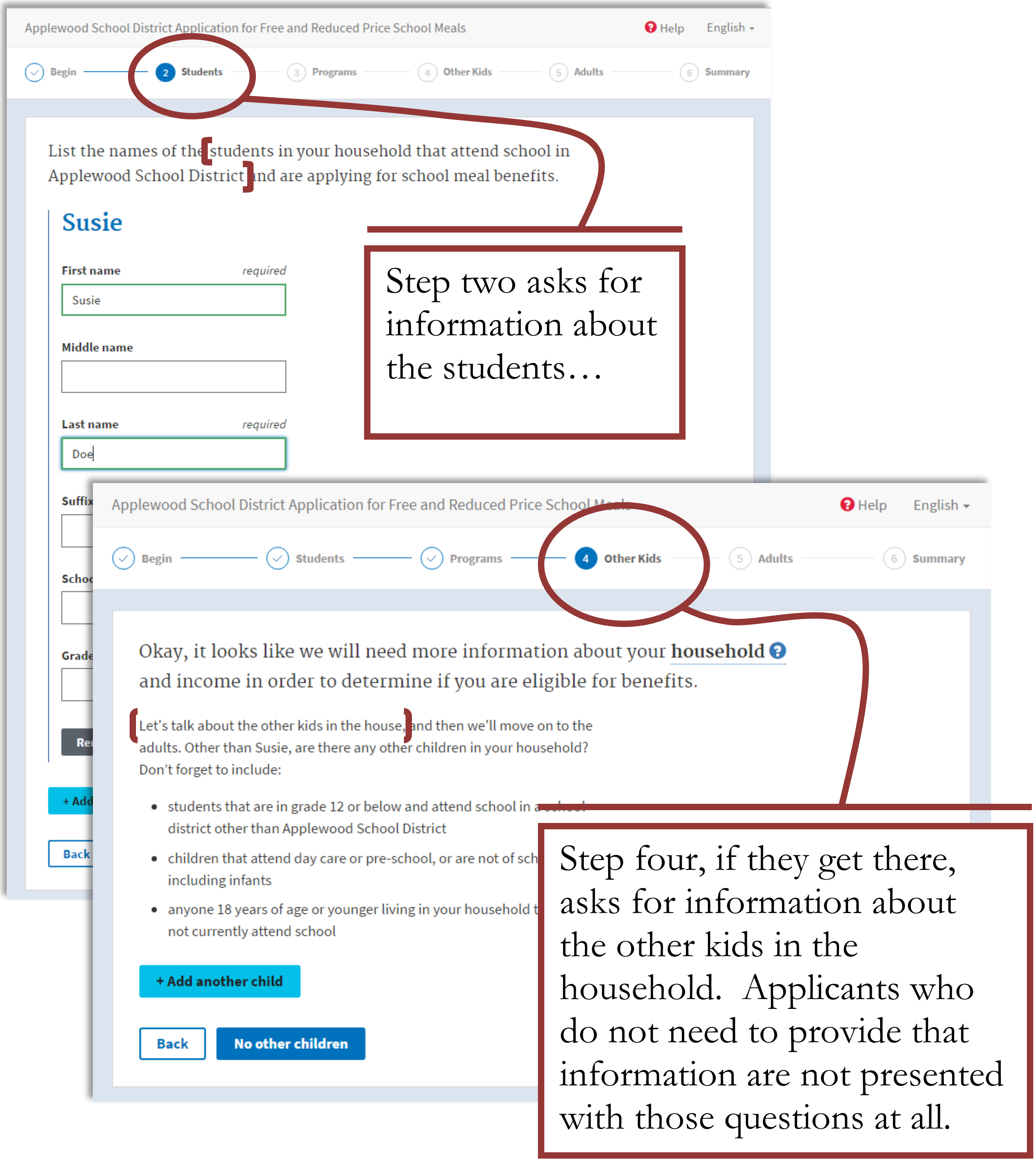
Distinct sections for students and "other kids"

Households applying on the basis of categorical eligibility (including participation in assistance programs, foster status, or participation in programs for homeless, migrant, or runaway youth) do not need to provide information for children other than the students in the district to which they are applying.


Applewood School District Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals
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List the names of the students in your household that attend school in Applewood School District and are applying for school meal benefits.

Susie

First name *required*: Susie

Middle name:

Last name *required*: Doe

Suffix
Scho
Grade
Re
+ Add
Back

Step two asks for information about the students…

Applewood School District Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals
Help
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Programs
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Okay, it looks like we will need more information about your **household** and income in order to determine if you are eligible for benefits.

Let's talk about the other kids in the house, and then we'll move on to the adults. Other than Susie, are there any other children in your household? Don't forget to include:

- students that are in grade 12 or below and attend school in a school district other than Applewood School District
- children that attend day care or pre-school, or are not of sch including infants
- anyone 18 years of age or younger living in your household t not currently attend school

+ Add another child
Back
No other children

Step four, if they get there, asks for information about the other kids in the household. Applicants who do not need to provide that information are not presented with those questions at all.

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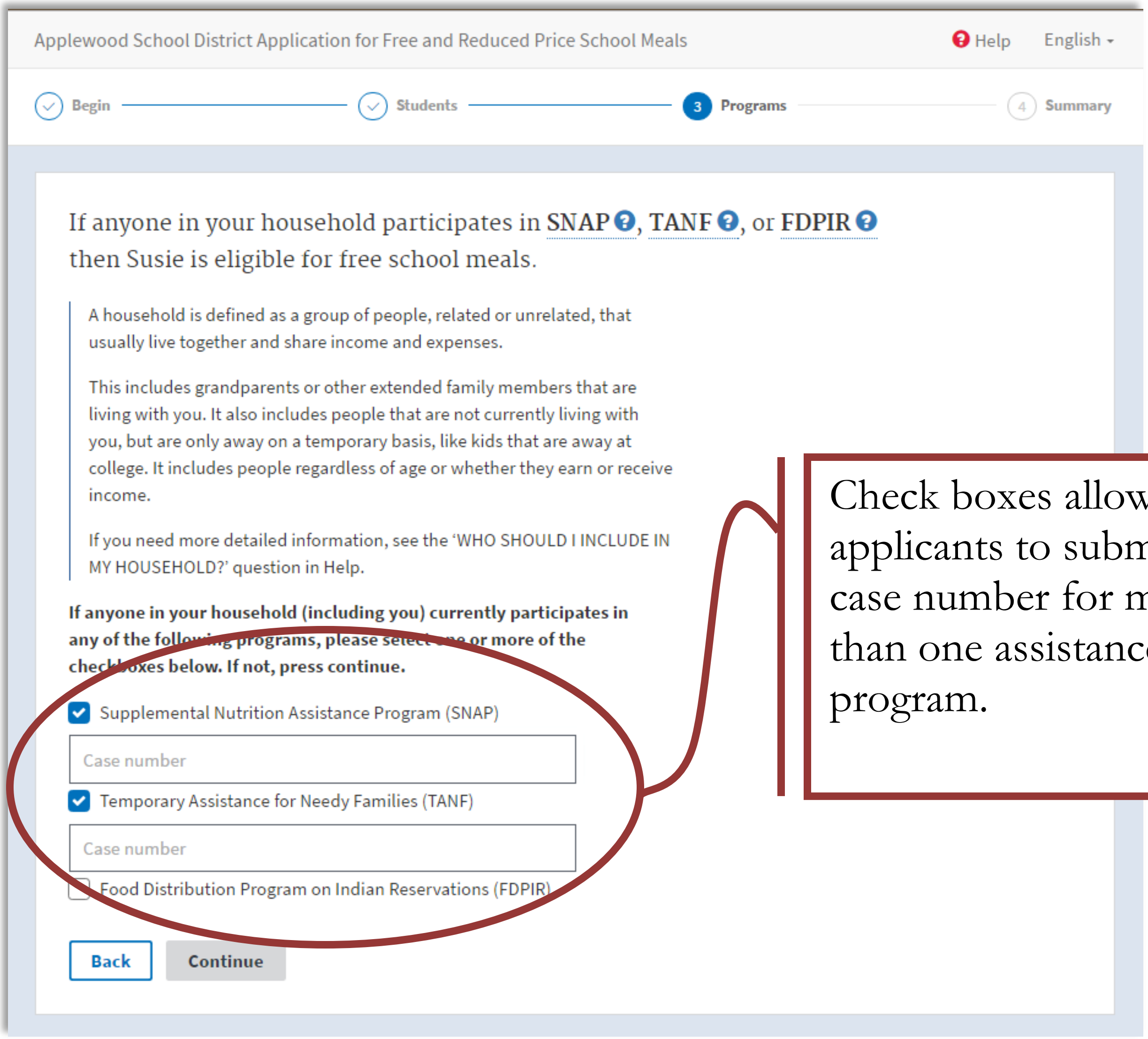
Submit more than one case number

No longer under the space constraints of a sheet of paper, there is plenty of room for applicants to enter more than one case number, if applicable and available. And if they accidentally provide a SNAP EBT card number instead of a case number, but also provide a valid TANF case number, certifying district officials will be able to certify the application without going back to the applicant.



Applewood School District Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals

If anyone in your household participates in SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR then Susie is eligible for free school meals.

> A household is defined as a group of people, related or unrelated, that usually live together and share income and expenses.
>
> This includes grandparents or other extended family members that are living with you. It also includes people that are not currently living with you, but are only away on a temporary basis, like kids that are away at college. It includes people regardless of age or whether they earn or receive income.
>
> If you need more detailed information, see the 'WHO SHOULD I INCLUDE IN MY HOUSEHOLD?' question in Help.

If anyone in your household (including you) currently participates in any of the following programs, please select one or more of the checkboxes below. If not, press continue.

☑ Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Case number

☑ Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

Case number

☐ Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)

Check boxes allow applicants to submit a case number for more than one assistance program.

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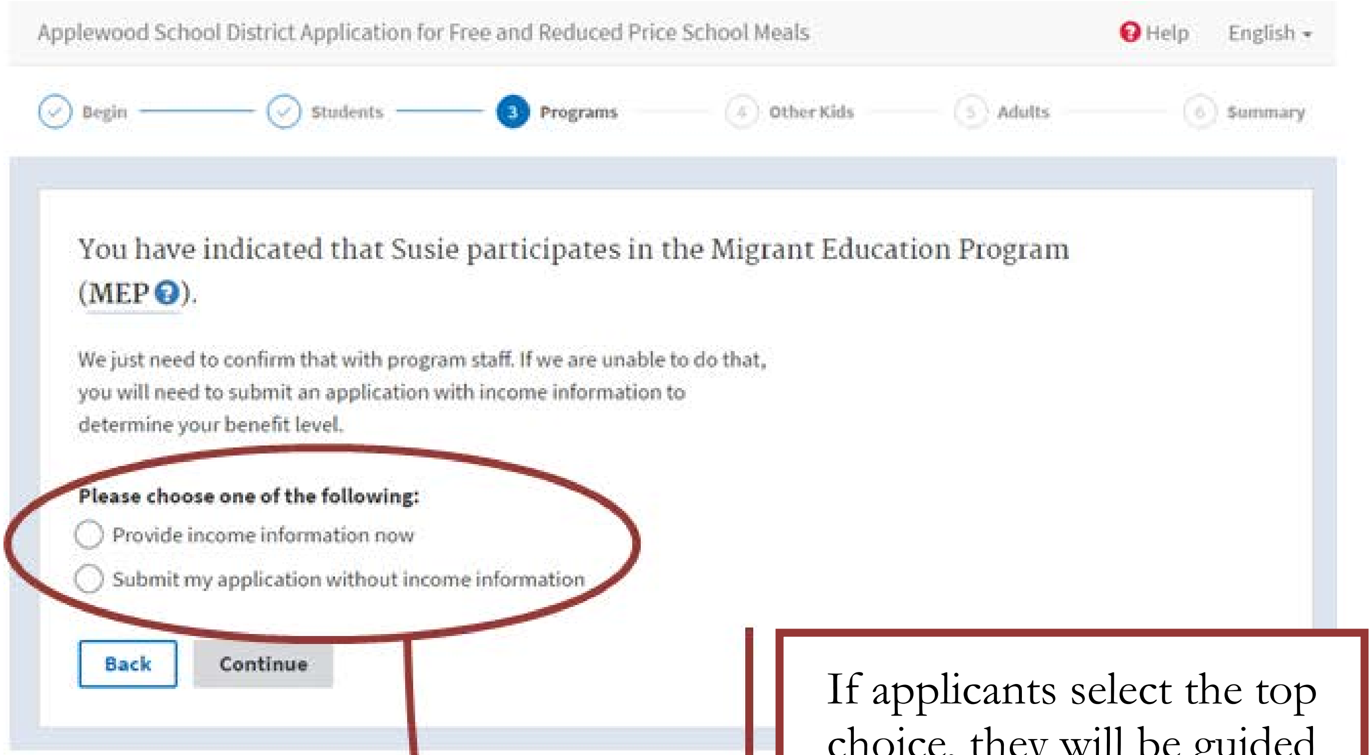
Informed choice

Households that are eligible for free or reduced meals because of student participation in a program for homeless, migrant or runaway youth are not required to provide income information in their applications. On the web-based prototype, applicants are asked specifically about participation in these programs (in contrast to other applications, including the FNS paper prototype, that simply contain checkboxes labeled, "homeless," "migrant," and "runaway"). If they indicate 'Yes' for one or more program, they reach the screen below that explains that their participation has to be confirmed before they can be certified for free meals. If applicants are confident in their response, they can submit their applications without income information, but if they are unsure, they have the option to complete the income section of the application before they submit.


Applewood School District Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals
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Continue

You have indicated that Susie participates in the Migrant Education Program (MEP).

We just need to confirm that with program staff. If we are unable to do that, you will need to submit an application with income information to determine your benefit level.

Please choose one of the following:

○ Provide income information now

○ Submit my application without income information

If applicants select the top choice, they will be guided through the income section of the application. If they select the bottom choice, they will be fast-tracked to the contact information screen.

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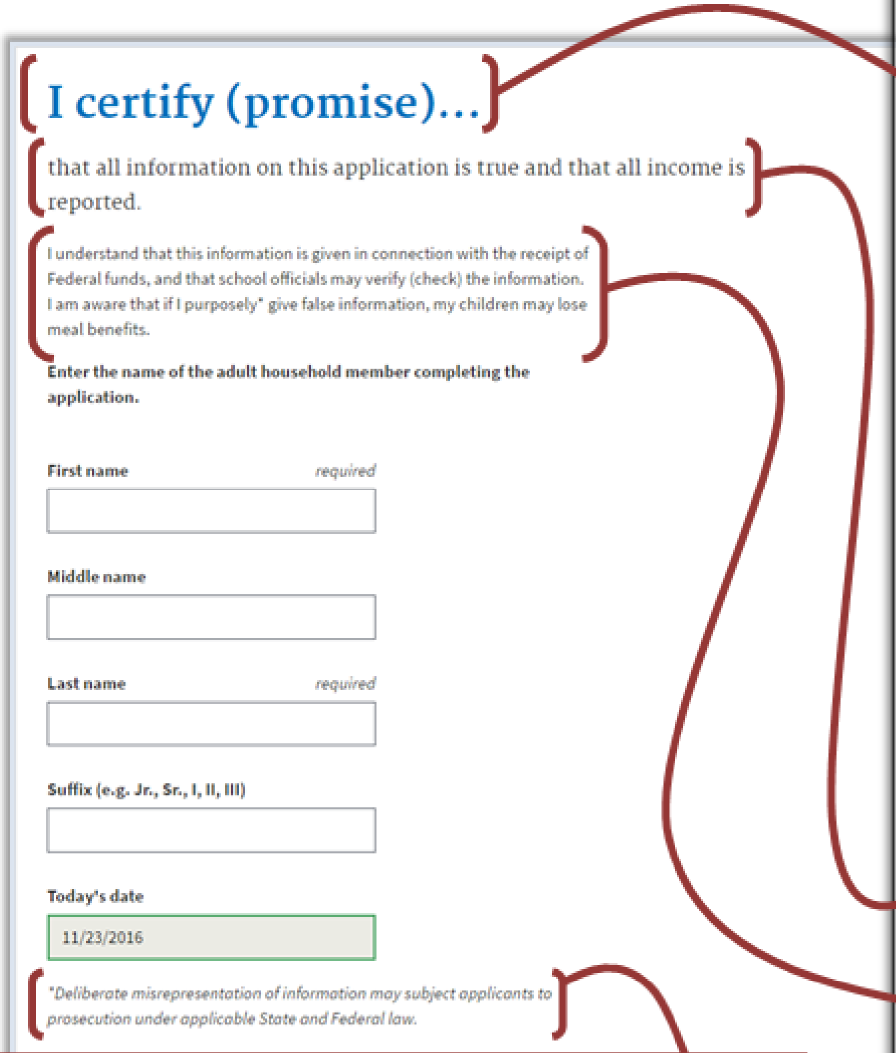
from the **U.S. Web Design Standards**

Paired typeface

Fonts impact more than just readability; they exude a particular look and feel that contributes to the overall tone of the application.



I certify (promise)…

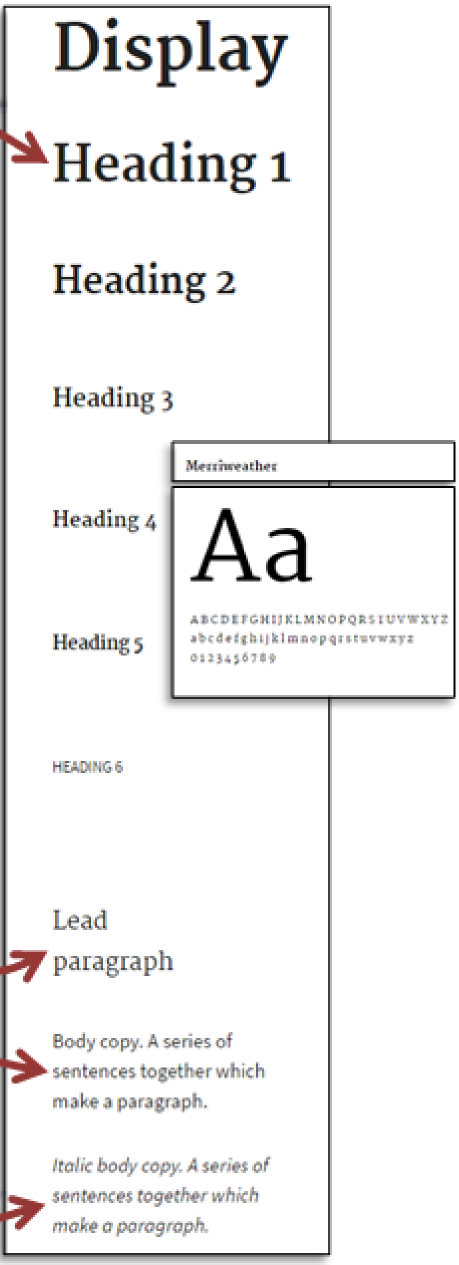
that all information on this application is true and that all income is reported.

I understand that this information is given in connection with the receipt of Federal funds, and that school officials may verify (check) the information. I am aware that if I purposely* give false information, my children may lose meal benefits.

Enter the name of the adult household member completing the application.

First name	*required*
Middle name	
Last name	*required*
Suffix (e.g. Jr., Sr., I, II, III)	
Today's date	11/23/2016

**Deliberate misrepresentation of information may subject applicants to prosecution under applicable State and Federal law.*



Display

Heading 1

Heading 2

Heading 3

Heading 4

Heading 5

HEADING 6

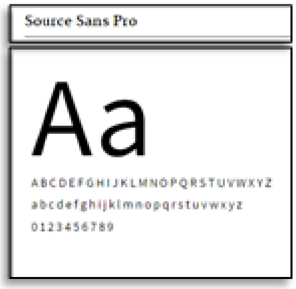
Lead paragraph

Body copy. A series of sentences together which make a paragraph.

Italic body copy. A series of sentences together which make a paragraph.

Merriweather
Aa
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789

> "A simple serif and sans serif combination designed to communicate warmth and credibility. Strong Merriweather heading weights offer clear information hierarchy and when paired with Source Sans Pro's easy-to-read body text, create a clean and professional feel."
>
> -U.S. Web Design Standards



Source Sans Pro
Aa
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789

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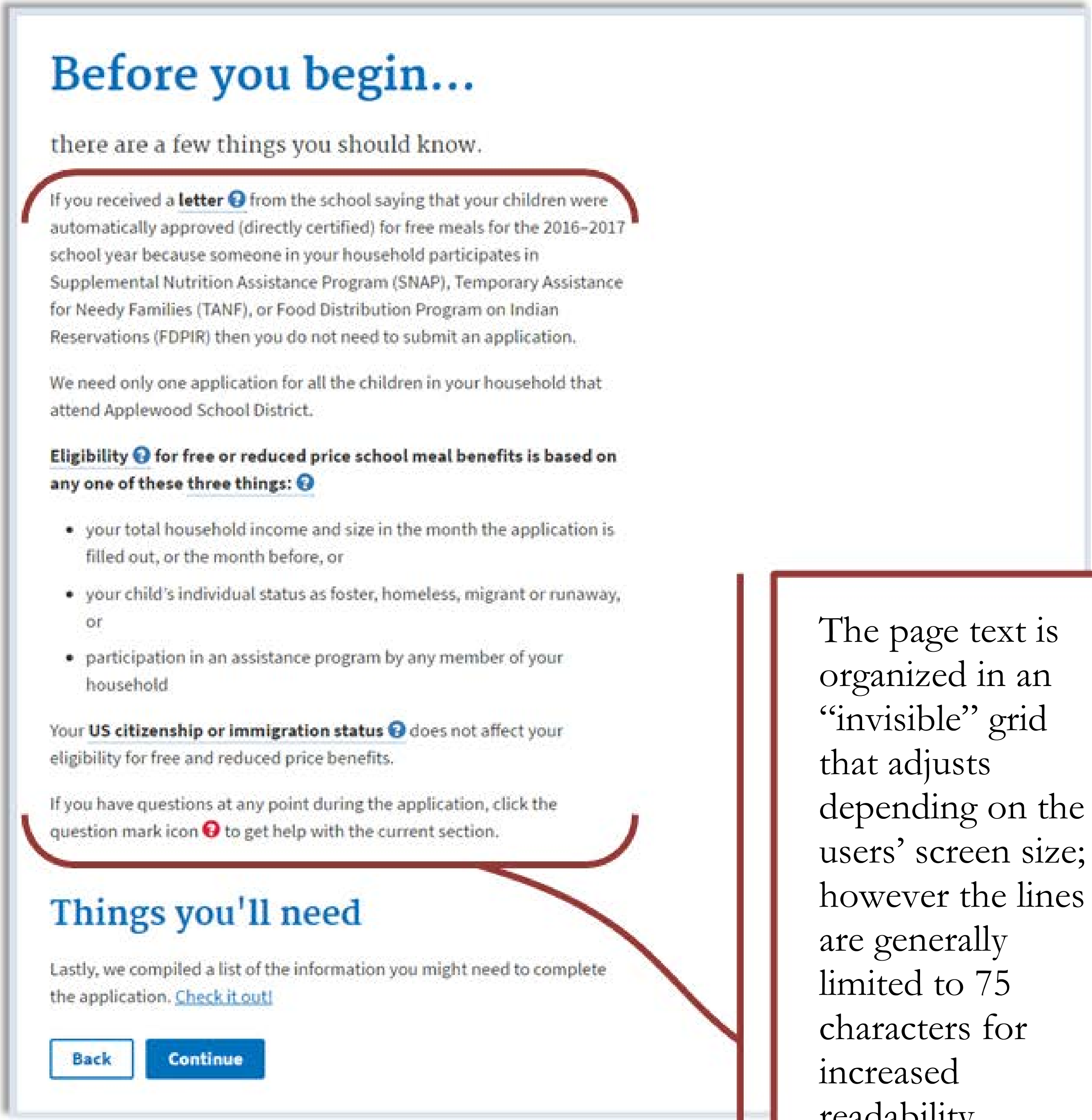
from the **U.S. Web Design Standards**

Dynamic grid layout

Content on the screen is aligned consistently throughout the application.



Before you begin...

there are a few things you should know.

If you received a **letter** from the school saying that your children were automatically approved (directly certified) for free meals for the 2016-2017 school year because someone in your household participates in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) then you do not need to submit an application.

We need only one application for all the children in your household that attend Applewood School District.

Eligibility for free or reduced price school meal benefits is based on any one of these three things:

- your total household income and size in the month the application is filled out, or the month before, or
- your child's individual status as foster, homeless, migrant or runaway, or
- participation in an assistance program by any member of your household

Your **US citizenship or immigration status** does not affect your eligibility for free and reduced price benefits.

If you have questions at any point during the application, click the question mark icon to get help with the current section.

Things you'll need

Lastly, we compiled a list of the information you might need to complete the application. Check it out!

The page text is organized in an "invisible" grid that adjusts depending on the users' screen size; however the lines are generally limited to 75 characters for increased readability.

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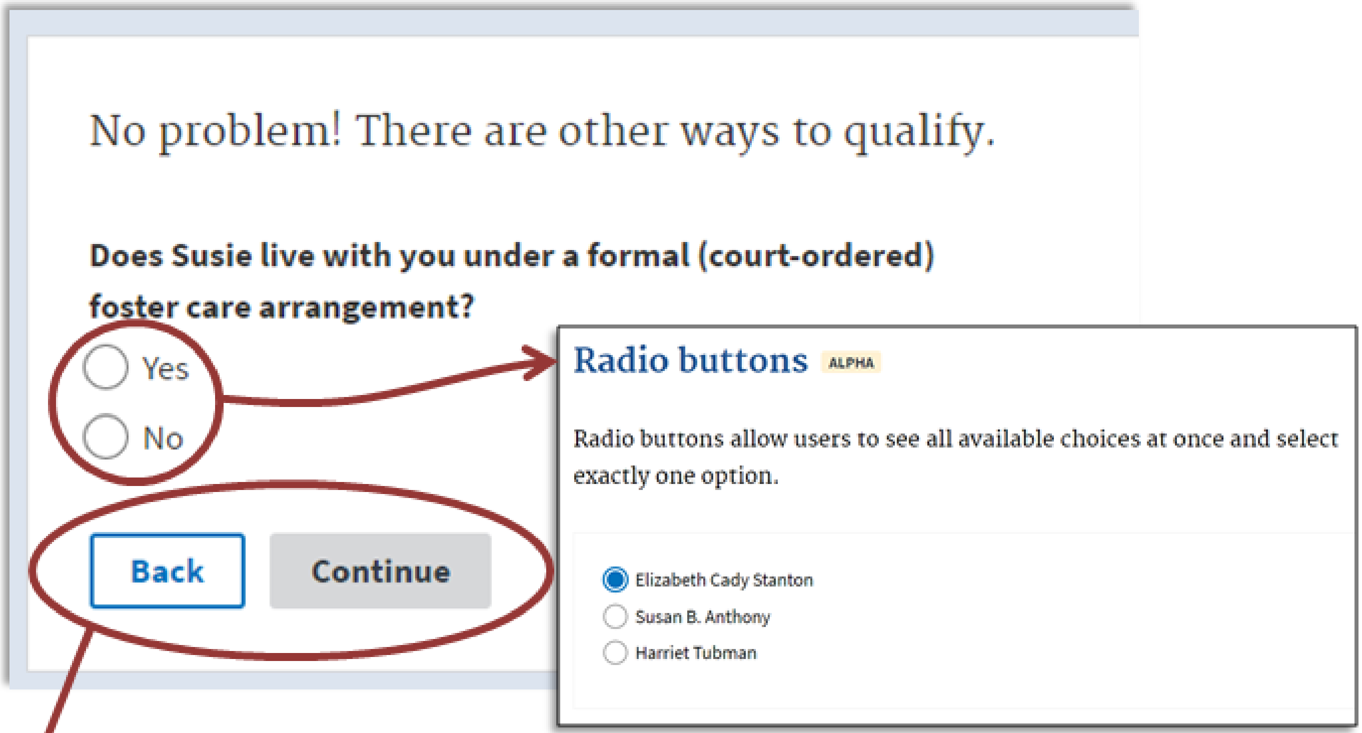
from the **U.S. Web Design Standards**

User-friendly buttons

Buttons are easy to see and click, whether using a desktop or mobile device.



No problem! There are other ways to qualify.

Does Susie live with you under a formal (court-ordered) foster care arrangement?

○ Yes

○ No

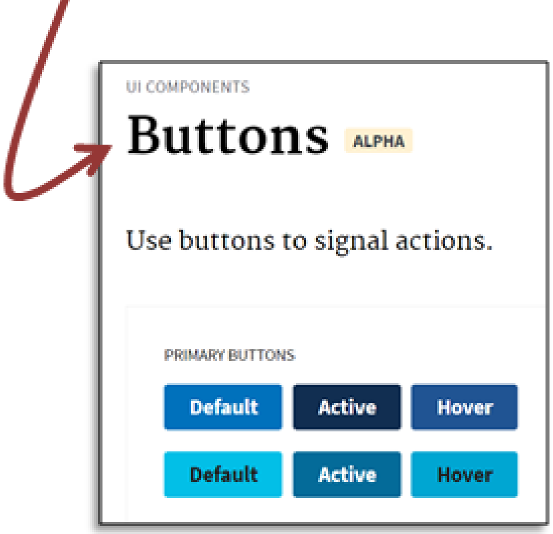
Radio buttons ALPHA

Radio buttons allow users to see all available choices at once and select exactly one option.

● Elizabeth Cady Stanton

○ Susan B. Anthony

○ Harriet Tubman



UI COMPONENTS

Buttons ALPHA

Use buttons to signal actions.

PRIMARY BUTTONS

> “A flexible, yet distinctly American palette designed to communicate warmth and trustworthiness while meeting the highest standards of 508 color contrast requirements.”
>
> -U.S. Web Design Standards

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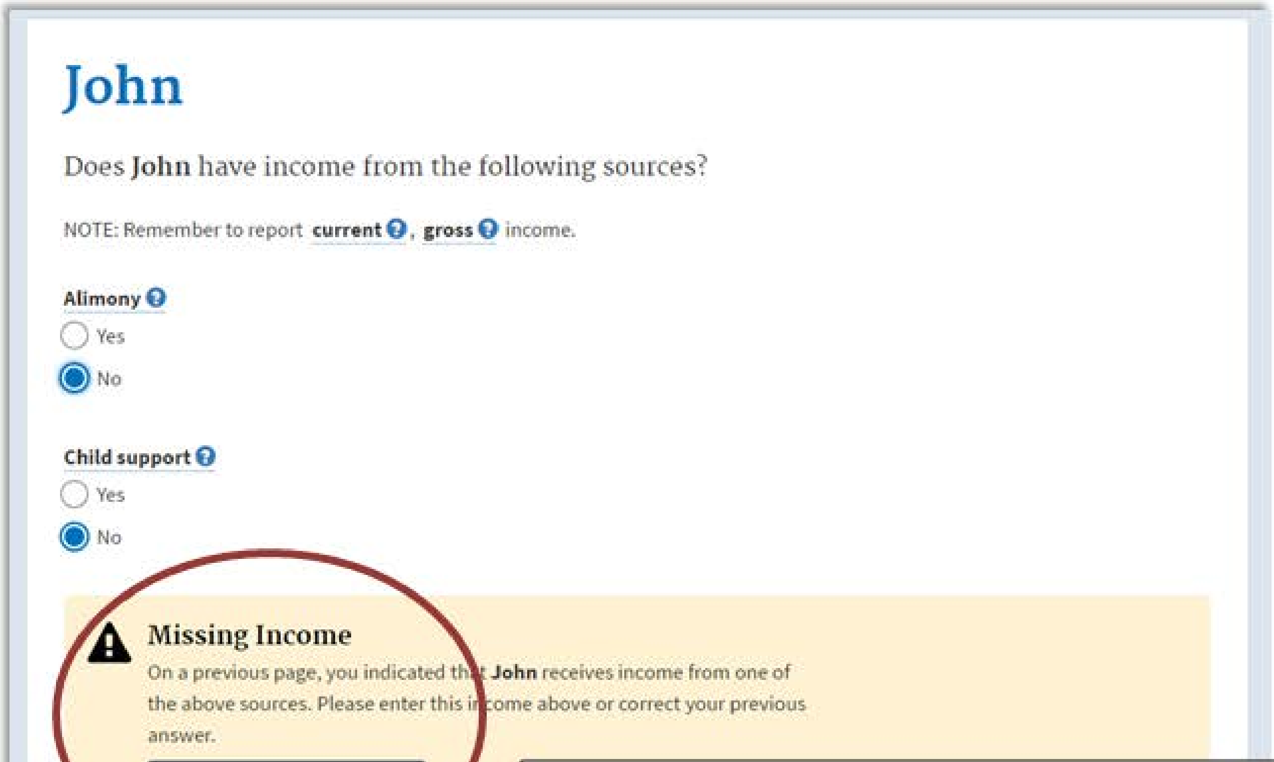
Informational alerts

from the **U.S. Web Design Standards**

Alerts provide users with critical pieces of information throughout the application process.



John

Does **John** have income from the following sources?

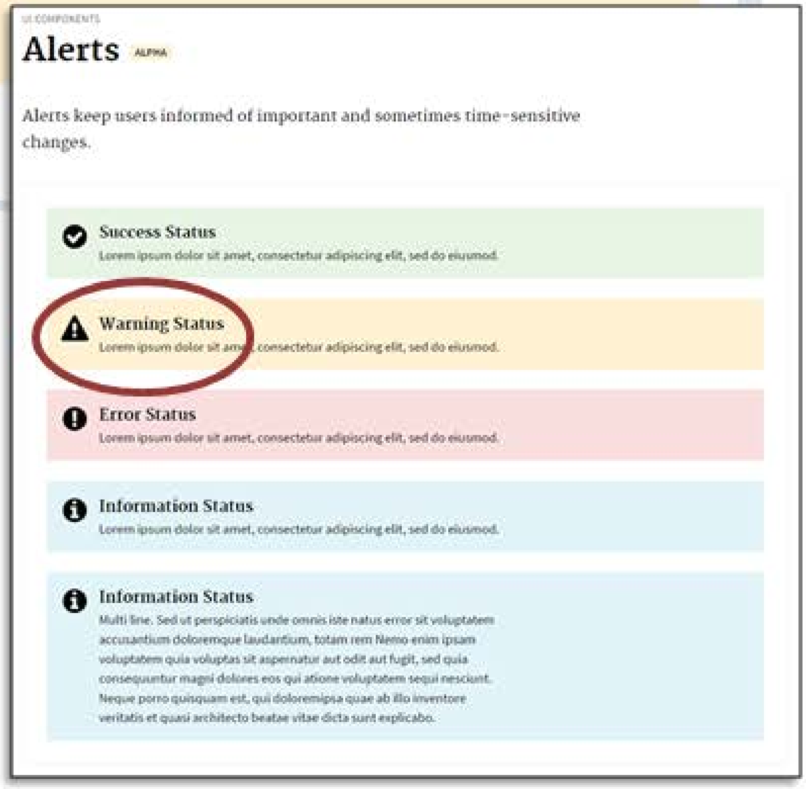
NOTE: Remember to report **current**, **gross** income.

Alimony
○ Yes
● No

Child support
○ Yes
● No

Missing Income

On a previous page, you indicated that **John** receives income from one of the above sources. Please enter this income above or correct your previous answer.



Alerts

Alerts keep users informed of important and sometimes time-sensitive changes.

Success Status
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod.

Warning Status
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod.

Error Status
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod.

Information Status
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod.

Information Status
Multi line. Sed ut perspiciatis unde omnis iste natus error sit voluptatem accusantium doloremque laudantium, totam rem Nemo enim ipsam voluptatem quia voluptas sit aspernatur aut odit aut fugit, sed quia consequuntur magni dolores eos qui atione voluptatem sequi nesciunt. Neque porro quisquam est, qui doloremipsa quae ab illo inventore veritatis et quasi architecto beatae vitae dicta sunt explicabo.

Applicants receive a *Warning Status* alert if they select “No” for all income sources within a category for which they previously selected “Yes.”

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> *There are many more examples of content and design features beyond what is contained in the pages of this Guide that were based on extensive research and deliberation among a variety of stakeholders. If you have questions about or comments on aspects of the design, email WebApp@fns.usda.gov.*

Section 3

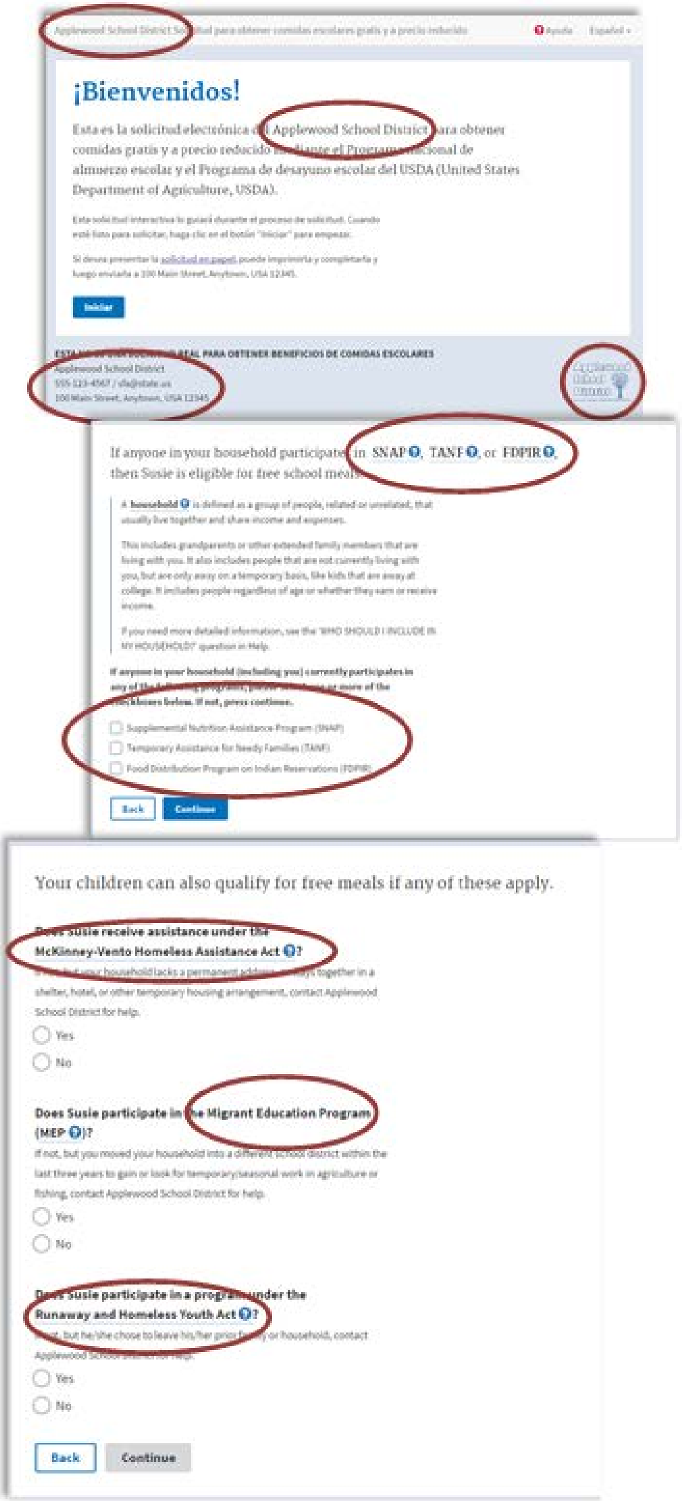
Tools & Tips for Using the Web-Based Prototype Application

A practical, how-to guide.

SFAs around the country have different needs when it comes to implementing and administering the school meal programs. With this in mind, the USDA web-based prototype application contains generic information and a minimal number of elements above those required by regulation. This section of the guide explores the elements of the application that need to be customized before use and describes additional elements that FNS recommends including in an application. It ends with insights and recommendations for programmers and IT professionals regarding the technical aspects of the code. If you are interested in incorporating some or all of the elements of the web-based prototype, we recommend passing this information on to your IT staff, contractor, or software vendor, as you will need to work in consultation with them to determine if and how adoption of the prototype can work in your State or district.

Where is the application hosted and who handles the security?

The prototype is not a USDA-hosted national application. Hosting this or any other online application remains a school district responsibility. The prototype application does not create a database, save applicant information, or include any database management tools. As stated in the *Eligibility Manual for School Meals,* it is the responsibility of SFAs to set up and maintain their own online systems, and to ensure the security of the personal information submitted by households on their applications.



Applewood School District Solicitud para obtener comidas escolares gratis y a precio reducido

¡Bienvenidos!

Esta es la solicitud electrónica del Applewood School District para obtener comidas gratis y a precio reducido mediante el Programa nacional de almuerzo escolar y el Programa de desayuno escolar del USDA (United States Department of Agriculture, USDA).

Esta solicitud interactiva lo guiará durante el proceso de solicitud. Cuando esté listo para solicitar, haga clic en el botón "Iniciar" para empezar.

Si desea presentar la solicitud en papel, puede imprimirla y completarla y luego enviarla a 100 Main Street, Anytown, USA 12345.

ESTA NO ES UNA SOLICITUD REAL PARA OBTENER BENEFICIOS DE COMIDAS ESCOLARES
Applewood School District
555-123-4567 / sfa@state.us
100 Main Street, Anytown, USA 12345

If anyone in your household participates in SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR, then Susie is eligible for free school meals.

A **household** is defined as a group of people, related or unrelated, that usually live together and share income and expenses.

This includes grandparents or other extended family members that are living with you. It also includes people that are not currently living with you, but are only away on a temporary basis, like kids that are away at college. It includes people regardless of age or whether they earn or receive income.

If you need more detailed information, see the "WHO SHOULD I INCLUDE IN MY HOUSEHOLD?" question in Help.

If anyone in your household (including you) currently participates in any of the following programs, please check one or more of the checkboxes below. If not, press continue.

☐ Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
☐ Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
☐ Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)

Your children can also qualify for free meals if any of these apply.

Does Susie receive assistance under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act?
If not, but your household lacks a permanent address or stays together in a shelter, hotel, or other temporary housing arrangement, contact Applewood School District for help.
○ Yes
○ No

Does Susie participate in the Migrant Education Program (MEP)?
If not, but you moved your household into a different school district within the last three years to gain or look for temporary/seasonal work in agriculture or fishing, contact Applewood School District for help.
○ Yes
○ No

Does Susie participate in a program under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act?
If not, but he/she chose to leave his/her prior family or household, contact Applewood School District for help.
○ Yes
○ No

Customization: what you need to know

The prototype application is branded with the name and logo of a fictional district called Applewood School District (or ASD for short), and contains fake contact information. Names for the assistance programs (SNAP, TANF, and FDPIR), as well as programs for the other sources of categorical eligibility (homeless, migrant and runaway) are in the form that is used at the national level, which may differ from the names used at the local level. In *Help*, the definition for the Income Eligibility Guidelines (IEGs) contains an image of an empty table (the same one that appears in the prototype parent letter in the application packet on FNS' website) that should contain the annual thresholds for reduced-price benefits.

These are just a few of the elements that need to be customized before the application could be used by a State or school district. Some others include:

- letting the applicant know when they should expect to receive an eligibility notification on the post-submission/ "Thank you" screen,
- removing the "download data" button from the "Thank you" screen (this is a developer feature to make the application's data accessible, which will aid in database set-up and/or management)

- updating the links to the USDA paper prototype application on the “Welcome” page and in the *Help* FAQ, “Can I apply using a paper application?” to the paper application for your State or district,
- adding different Help topics relevant or useful to the applicants in your State or district, or
- requiring additional fields to facilitate proper identification, such as school, grade or student ID.

The language in the application is also written in a friendly, conversational tone, but FNS recognizes that communication styles and needs of program participants vary across the country, and that changes to the wording of questions or instructions may be appropriate. Along the same lines, translated versions of the application released by FNS may need to be adjusted in order to provide consistent messaging to program participants.

There are several other things that you may want or need to have in your online application. For example, instead of a free-form text field, a pre-populated drop-down list of all the schools in the district may be helpful to both applicants and certifying officials. A way for families to “opt out” of applying (i.e., deny benefits) is another option you may want to include. Also, States or districts are responsible for adding text to their online applications, if necessary, to ensure that households are informed of any planned disclosure of personal information beyond that needed for free or reduced price certification. As stated in the Eligibility Manual, “[districts] that plan to disclose children’s eligibility status for purposes other than determining and verifying free or reduced price eligibility must inform households of this potential disclosure. In some cases, the LEA must obtain consent of a parent or guardian prior to the disclosure. LEAs that anticipate disclosure specifically to Medicaid or CHIP must notify households of this and give them the opportunity to decline the disclosure.” Another item, also stated in the eligibility manual, is that school district software should convert all income amounts to an

Note: The monthly total on the summary page is a prompt for the applicant. It is not meant to be used by the school district for comparison against the IEGs.

Required skills

Here is a list of skills to look for in a contractor or IT professional to work with the prototype application’s code:

- ✓ Javascript
- ✓ Familiarity with REACT libraries

You will also need someone with these skills to help you set up the web-based prototype application:

- ✓ Database set-up
- ✓ Data security

annual amount if the application includes incomes with different frequencies. The USDA prototype does not do that for you.

Many of these changes are straightforward and do not require programming skill. However, there are a number of other changes and additions that must be implemented before the application is "usable" that *do* require programming skills. (For example, setting up a database to capture and store application data.) The "Required skills" box to the right lists a few of the critical skills necessary for working with the code for the prototype application, or for setting up an online application in your State or district. Have your IT staff or contractor take look at the "For Developers" section for a more complete picture of the application's underlying structure, and to determine what additional expertise, if any, you need to bring on board.

Subscribe to the govDELIVERY listserv from the FNS webpage to stay up-to-date on the latest information and updates regarding the web-based prototype application.

Section 4

Developers guide: introduction to the code behind the web-based prototype

The NSLP Prototype Application is a JavaScript program utilizing React.js, a JavaScript Library for building user interfaces.
All of the NSLP application source code is located in the following directory:

[Drive/Directory under which you unzipped download file]\school-meals\src\components

A final, compiled build of the application is stored in the \docs directory. To help tie together the operational prototype with the source files, we have created an application roadmap. The purpose of the roadmap below is to familiarize personnel (who will be customizing and/or extending the NSLP Prototype) with the application's structure and data.

Application Roadmap

Screen	Source File	Previous Screen(s)	Next Screen(s)	Data Field	
				Name	Description
Welcome	Welcome.jsx	N/A	Before You Begin	N/A	N/A
Before You Begin	BeforeYouBegin.jsx	Welcome	Attestation	N/A	N/A
Attestation	Attestation.jsx	Before You Begin	Students	First name	Required
				Middle name	Optional
				Last name	Required
				Suffix	Optional
				Today's date	Automatic
Students	Students.jsx	Attestation	Assistance Programs	Student First Name	Required; one or more students
				Student Middle Name	Optional
				Student Last Name	Required
				Student Suffix	Optional
				Student Grade	Optional
Assistance Programs	AssistancePrograms.jsx	Students	Contact Info (if any assistance programs are checked)	SNAP	Optional
				TANF	Optional
				FDPIR	Optional
			Foster (if no assistance programs are checked)	SNAF Case Number	Required if SNAP checked
				TANF Case Number	Required if TANF checked
				FDPIR Case Number	Required if FDPIR checked
Contact Info	Contact.jsx	Assistance Programs	Optional Student Information	Phone Number	Optional
		Foster		Email	Optional
				Street address 1	Optional
				Street address 2	Optional
				City	Optional
				State	Optional
				ZIP	Optional
Optional Student Information	Demographics.jsx	Contact Info	Legal Statements	Ethnicity	Optional; Demographic Info for each student
				Race	Optional
Legal Statements	LegalStatements.jsx	Optional Student Information	Summary	N/A	
Summary	Summary.jsx	Legal Statements	Thank You	Certification Check Box	Required;
Thank You	ThankYou.jsx	Summary	N/A	N/A	

Screen	Source File	Previous Screen(s)	Next Screen(s)	Data Field	
				Name	**Description**
Foster	Foster.jsx	Assistance Programs	Contact Info (if court-ordered foster care is yes)	Court-ordered foster care	Required
			Other Programs (if court-ordered foster care is no)		
Other Programs	OtherPrograms.jsx	Foster	Income Election (if either McKinney-Vento Homeless Assitance Act or Runaway & Homeless Youth Acted indicated)	Receive assistance under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act	Required
			Other Children (if neither McKinney-Vento Homeless Assitance Act or Runaway & Homeless Youth Acted indicated)	Participate in the Migrant Education Program	Required
				Participate in a program under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act	Required
Income Election	IncomeElection.jsx	Other Programs	Contact Info(if Submit without income selected)	Provide Income Selection	Required
			Other Children (if Provide income information now selected		
Other Children	OtherChildren.jsx	Income Election	Child Income	Child First Name	Required
				Child Middle Name	Optional; Zero or more children
				Child Last Name	Required
				Child Suffix	Optional
				Foster Child	Checkbox
Child Income	ChildIncome.jsx	Other Children	Adults in household (if no child income)	Does child have income	Required

Screen	Source File	Previous Screen(s)	Next Screen(s)	Data Field	
				Name	**Description**
Child Income Sources	ChildIncomeSlide.jsx	Child Income	Adults	Money earned from a full or part-time job	Required
				Amount for full or part-time job	Required if child has full or part-time job income
				Frequency of pay for full or part-time job	Required if child has full or part-time job income
				Social Security	Required
				Amount for Social Security	Required if child has Social Security income
				Frequency of Social Security	Required if child has Social Security income
				Money from family or friends	Required
				Amount of money from family or friends	Required if child has money from family or friends
				Frequency of money from family or friends	Required if child has money from family or friends
				Pension	Required
				Amount for Pension Income	Required if child has Pension income
				Frequency of Pension Income	Required if child has Pension income
				Other Income	Required
				Amount for Other Income	Required if child has Other income
				Frequency of Other Income	Required if child has Other income
Adults	Adults.jsx	Child Income Sources	Adult Income	Adult First Name	Required when other adult added
				Adult Middle Name	Optional

Screen	Source File	Previous Screen(s)	Next Screen(s)	Data Field	
				Name	**Description**
				Adult Last Name	Required when other adult added
				Adult Suffix	Optional
Adult Income	AdultIncomeOverview.jsx	Adults	Military Income (if Military income indicated)	Military	Required
				Deployed	Required when Military is indicated
				Has non-military earnings	Required when Military is indicated
				Income from public assistance	Required
				Alimony or Child Support	Required
				Unemployment, Veteran, worker's comp, strike, disability	Required
				Retirement	Required
				Other	Required
Military Income	MilitaryIncome.jsx	Conditional based on income elections	Conditional based on income elections	Basic Income	Required
				Amount for Basic Income	Required if adult has Basic income
				Frequency of Basic Income	Required if adult has Basic income
				Bonus Income	Required
				Amount for Bonus Income	Required if adult has Bonus income
				Frequency of Bonus Income	Required if adult has Bonus income
				Allowance Income	Required
				Amount for Allowance Income	Required if adult has Allowance income
				Frequency of Allowance Income	Required if adult has Allowance income
Public Assistance Income	PublicAssistanceIncome.jsx	Conditional based on income elections	Conditional based on income elections	SSI Income	Required
				Amount for SSI Income	Required if adult has SSI income

Screen	Source File	Previous Screen(s)	Next Screen(s)	Data Field	
				Name	Description
				Frequency of SSI Income	Required if adult has SSI income
				Cash Assistance Income	Required
				Amount for Cash Assistance Income	Required if adult has Cash Assistance income
				Frequency of Cash Assistance Income	Required if adult has Cash Assistance income
Spousal Income	SpousalIncome.jsx	Conditional based on income elections	Conditional based on income elections	Alimony Income	Required
				Amount for Alimony Income	Required if adult has Alimony income
				Frequency of Alimony Income	Required if adult has Alimony income
				Child support Income	Required
				Amount for Child support Income	Required if adult has Alimony income
				Frequency of Child support Income	Required if adult has Child support income
Unemployment Income	UnemploymentIncome.jsx	Conditional based on income elections	Conditional based on income elections	Unemployment Income	Required
				Amount for Unemployment Income	Required if adult has Unemployment income
				Frequency of Unemployment Income	Required if adult has Unemployment income
				Worker’s Compensation Income	Required
				Amount for Worker’s Compensation Income	Required if adult has Worker’s Compensation income

Screen	Source File	Previous Screen(s)	Next Screen(s)	Data Field	
				Name	Description
				Frequency of Worker's Compensation Income	Required if adult has Worker's Compensation income
				Strike Income	Required
				Amount for Strike Income	Required if adult has Strike income
				Frequency of Strike Income	Required if adult has Strike income
				SSDI Income	Required
				Amount for SSDI Income	Required if adult has SSDI income
				Frequency of SSDI Income	Required if adult has SSDI income
				Veteran Income	Required
				Amount for Veteran Income	Required if adult has Veteran income
				Frequency of Veteran Income	Required if adult has Veteran income
Retirement Income	RetirementIncome.jsx	Conditional based on income elections	Conditional based on income elections	Social Security Income	Required
				Amount for Social Security Income	Required if adult has Social Security income
				Frequency of Social Security Income	Required if adult has Social Security income
				Pension Income	Required
				Amount for Pension Income	Required if adult has Pension income
				Frequency of Pension Income	Required if adult has Pension income
Other Income	OtherIncome.jsx	Conditional based on income elections	SSN	Cash Income	Required
				Amount for Cash Income	Required if adult has Cash income
				Frequency of Cash Income	Required if adult has Cash income
				Rental Income	Required

Screen	Source File	Previous Screen(s)	Next Screen(s)	Data Field	
				Name	Description
				Amount for Rental Income	Required if adult has Rental income
				Frequency of Rental Income	Required if adult has Rental income
				Interest Income	Required
				Amount for Interest Income	Required if adult has Interest income
				Frequency of Interest Income	Required if adult has Interest income
				Investment Income	Required
				Amount for Investment Income	Required if adult has Investment income
				Frequency of Investment Income	Required if adult has Investment income
				Annuity Income	Required
				Amount for Annuity Income	Required if adult has Annuity income
				Frequency of Annuity Income	Required if adult has Annuity income
				Other Income	Required
				Amount for Other Income	Required if adult has Other income
				Frequency of Other Income	Required if adult has Other income
SSN	Signature.jsx	Conditional based on income elections	Contact Info	SSN	Required if "No SSN" not checked
				No SSN	Checkbox

How to customize the NSLP application for your School District

Every School District will need to make the following changes to “rebrand” the NSLP application identifying your School District, contact information, and your School District Logo. All of the customizable School District information is located in the config.js file.

Locate the file config.js in the ../school-meals/src /directory.
The original downloaded config.js file will look like this:

```
export const schoolYear = null


export const organization = {
  name: 'Applewood School District',
  shortname: 'ASD',
   logoUrl: 'img/Applewood_logo.png',
   contact: {
     address: '100 Main Street, Anytown, USA 12345',
     phone: '555-123-4567',
     email: 'sfa@state.us'
   },
   paperApplication: {
     url:
'http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/cn/SP34-
2016a2.pdf',
     address: '100 Main Street, Anytown, USA 12345',
     phone: '555-123-4567',
     email: 'sfa@state.us'
   }
 }


 export const assistancePrograms = [
   'Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)',
   'Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)',
   'Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)'
 ]

 export const assistanceProgramsVarArray = [
   {
     fullName: 'Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program',
     accronym: 'SNAP'
   },
   {
     fullName: 'Temporary Assistance for Needy Families',
     accronym: 'TANF'
   },
   {
     fullName: 'Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations',
     accronym: 'FDPIR'
   }
 ]

 export const assistanceProgramsVar = {
   snap: assistanceProgramsVarArray[0],
   tanf: assistanceProgramsVarArray[1],
   fdpir: assistanceProgramsVarArray[2]
 }

 export const hmrPrograms = {
   mep: {
     fullName: 'Migrant Education Program',
     accronym: 'MEP'
   },
   mckinney: {
     shortName: 'McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act',
     fullName: 'McKinney-Vento Education of Homeless
Chilren and Youth Assistance Act'
   },
   runaway: 'Runaway and Homeless Youth Act'
 }

 // To support an additional language:
 //     1. add an import statment for it:
 import es from 'react-intl/locale-data/es';
 import en from 'react-intl/locale-data/en';

 //     2. add its language code to the following array:
 import { addLocaleData } from 'react-intl'
 addLocaleData([...es, ...en])

 //     3. create a JSON file in /translations/ with the
name of the locale code
 //     4. add locale to the following array (NOTE: keep
English as first item)
 export const locales = [
   {
     code: 'en',
     language: 'English',
     iSpeak: 'I speak English'
   },
   {
     code: 'es',
     language: 'Español',
     iSpeak: 'Yo hablo español'
   }
 ]
```

To customize/rebrand the NSLP application, simply change the literal values (in single quotes) with your School District's information (name, shortname, logo and contact information). You will have to add your School District Logo to the ./school-meals/img directory.

To modify household assistance programs (e.g. to rename “SNAP” to “CalFresh”) please modify the values of the “assistancePrograms” items.

To modify the school year, simply set the schoolYear variable in the config.js file (value should be a number, e.g. 2016).

NOTE: you don’t have to do this. If you leave the value of the schoolyear variable as null, then the application will automatically update the school year every calendar year.

How to direct data entered into the NSLP application to a database

As originally developed as an operational prototype, the NSLP application creates a JavaScript Object Notation (JSON) file containing all of the object tags for data entered by the user and the values entered. You may recode the script for the Download Data button following the Summary Page to insert the data into a database or aggregator file. The script for the Download Data button is located in the source file .\school-meals\src\components\application\slides\ThankYou.jsx

The NSLP Prototype currently utilizes the download.js library to save the information collected during the application process into a JSON file. The library is stored in the directory .\school-meals\node_modules\downloadjs. By researching Open Source components that meet your requirements for printing, storing, or processing family data entered into the application.

You may remove this button (which is intended to demonstrate the data captured by the application) and introduce code that saves this data to a database when the application is submitted.

The best way to do that is by adding a componentDidMount() function to the src/components/application/slides/ThankYou.jsx file, which should persist the variable this.props.applicationData to a storage location of your choice. Note that being a JSON object, this data might most simply be persisted to a document store that natively accommodates JSON objects (e.g. MongoDB, DynamoDB, PostrgreSQL, etc.).

How to unhide the developer "Data" toolbar button for debugging and verification while you customize the application

In order to allow developers to verify data and code changes as you customize the NSLP Prototype for your School District, the original developer of the NSLP application created the "Data" toolbar button. This button allows for viewing of the populated data hash while testing code modifications; however, it is currently hidden. In order to unhide the "Data" toolbar button, you must uncomment the following section of code in the file .\school-meals\components\Navigation.jsx:

```
{/*
<NavItem eventKey={2} onClick={this.handleData}>
     <Glyphicon glyph="list-alt" />&nbsp;
     <FormattedMessage
     id="nav.data"
     description="Text for the Data navigation
item."
     defaultMessage="Data"
     />
</NavItem>
*/}
```

The comment delimiters are the '{/*' and '*/}' respectively. Once you remove them, the "Data" toolbar button will be available for test and debugging while you customize and modify the NSLP application to meet your School District requirements.
To re-hide the "Data" toolbar button, simply replace the comment delimiters as shown in the code snippet above.

How to add fields to the NSLP application to meet School District requirements

By default, the application captures the following information about students:

- (inherited from PersonCollection): firstName
- (inherited from PersonCollection): middleName
- (inherited from PersonCollection): lastName
- (inherited from PersonCollection): suffixName
- (defined in StudentCollection): school
- (defined in StudentCollection): name

To collect additional information about students (e.g. a student ID number), simply add appropriate entries to the object returned by the fields() method in the StudentCollection class. Note that the label for each of these additional date fields should be accompanied by a corresponding translation in all translation files located within the translations/ directory.

Utilizing Open Graph tags for the NSLP application

If you intend to share the URL to your application in any social media, it is recommended to add Open Graph tags to your index.html document. This will allow social media platforms to represent your site as you would like it to be represented when people share its URL.

Example tags:

```
   <meta property="og:site_name" content="School Meals Application"/>
   <meta property="og:title" content="School Meals Application"/>
   <meta property="og:type" content="website"/>
   <meta property="og:image"
content="https://d55ey47q998kv.cloudfront.net/og-image.png"/>
   <meta itemprop="thumbnailUrl"
content="https://d55ey47q998kv.cloudfront.net/og-image.png"/>
   <link rel="image_src" href="https://d55ey47q998kv.cloudfront.net/og-
image.png" />
   <meta itemprop="image"
content="https://d55ey47q998kv.cloudfront.net/og-image.png"/>
   <meta name="twitter:title" content="School Meals Application"/>
   <meta name="twitter:image"
content="https://d55ey47q998kv.cloudfront.net/og-image.png"/>
   <meta name="twitter:card" content="summary"/>
   <meta name="description" content="A model application developed by
USDA to demonstrate the potential functionality of a school district's
application for school meals (***NOT A REAL APPLICATION FOR
SCHOOL MEAL BENEFITS***)." />
```

Creating a working version of the NSLP application for further development

After you make changes to the *src* files, follow these instructions to create a new build:
After making changes to .js or .jsx files as described in this guide, open your computer command prompt (shell, etc.) and navigate to the directory [*NSLProotlocation*]\school-meals and run the command:

➢ npm run build

This will create a new *bundle.js* file in the .\docs\static\ directory. If you have changed any .css, image, or translation files, you must copy them from their respective locations to the corresponding folder within the .\docs\ directory.

Additionally, if you choose to create or modify any non-English translation files, you must also copy those from .\translations\ to .\docs\translations\. Finally, it is advisable to "bust cache" of any static assets that you modify by altering the query string of the assets as referenced in .\docs\index.html (e.g., change bundle.js?xxxxxx to bundle.js?yyyyyy where xxxxxx and yyyyyy are random strings).

Now that you have generated a new, customized version of the NSLP application, follow the instructions presented in the README.md file to launch Node.js and test your application.