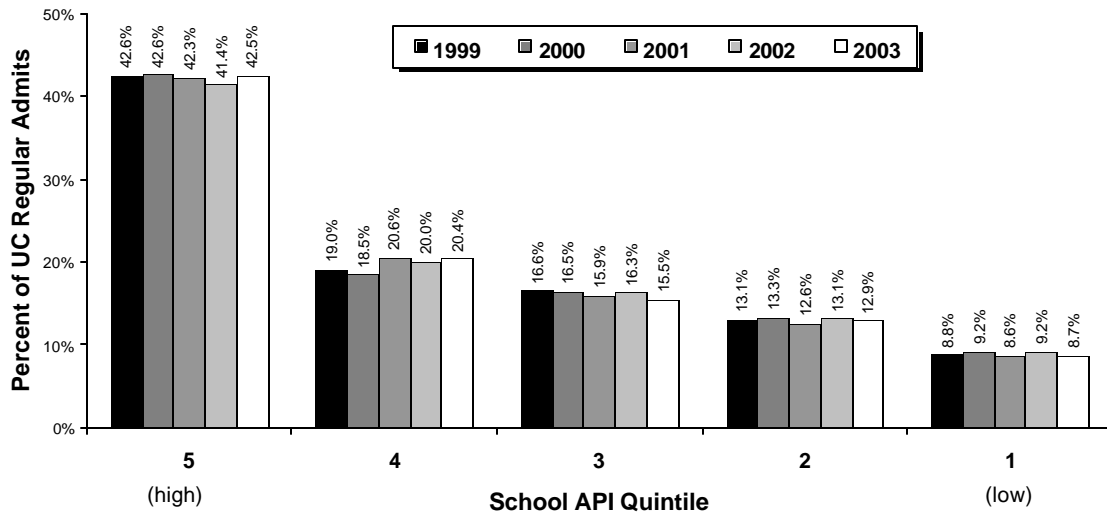


## UC Eligibility And K-12 Educational Stratification

Students from high-performing schools and socioeconomically advantaged backgrounds tend to receive more rigorous academic preparation and thus historically have been favored in UC's eligibility criteria. The chart below shows, for the systemwide pool of students admitted to UC from California high schools, the proportion of students from schools in each Academic Performance Index (API) quintile. The API is a measure used by the California Department of Education to rank schools based on student performance on K-12 standardized tests:

**Proportion of Regular Admits from CA Public High Schools by School API Quintile, 1999 to 2003**



The systemwide pool of UC regular admits closely mirrors the overall eligibility pool, since UC policies guarantee admission somewhere in the system for all eligible applicants. As the above chart demonstrates, students from upper-API schools are disproportionately represented in that pool. Over 40 percent of the UC eligibility pool come from schools in the top API quintile, and the top two API quintiles combined account for about 60 percent of the overall pool. In contrast, students in the bottom two API quintiles combined account for only about 20 percent of the pool. This pattern has remained consistent over time, even despite recent initiatives such as ELC and expanded UC outreach programs to disadvantaged schools.

Moreover, such differences across schools in access to UC are associated with a number of other academic and socioeconomic differences, as shown in the table on the following page:

**Characteristics of Regular Admits from CA Public High Schools  
by School API Quintile, Fall 2003**

API Quintile	% of Total	SAT I	SAT II	HSGPA	Income
<b>5</b>	42.5%	1259	1892	3.78	\$110,979
<b>4</b>	20.4%	1196	1784	3.83	\$89,109
<b>3</b>	15.5%	1162	1734	3.84	\$76,518
<b>2</b>	12.9%	1110	1688	3.81	\$56,814
<b>1</b>	8.7%	1013	1610	3.77	\$38,032
Total	100.0%	1190	1796	3.80	\$86,364

Source: UC admissions data. Excludes students from private schools and schools with missing API ranks.

As this table indicates, the API rank of a school is directly related to other forms of advantage and disadvantage. Among students regularly admitted to UC in 2003, parental income and SAT I scores are most closely related to school API rank, although this is less true for SAT II scores and high school grades, the latter of which do not vary substantially across school API quintiles. The close relationships between school API rank, SAT I scores, and parental income reflect the cumulative advantages and disadvantages experienced by students at the top and bottom of California's highly stratified K-12 educational system.