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Monday, July 7, 2003

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## **Governor Vetoes Republican Cuts to State's 4-Year-Old Kindergarten Program**

### ***Also Protects Wisconsin's Model Lower Class Size Program***

WAUWATOSA – At a news conference at McKinley Elementary School in Wauwatosa today, Governor Jim Doyle announced that he will use his veto pen to restore \$46 million in Republican cuts to Wisconsin's successful 4-year-old kindergarten program and protect SAGE, the state's model lower class size program.

"Wisconsin's children cannot afford a budget that cuts 4-year-old kindergarten and scales back SAGE," Governor Doyle said. "While our 4-year-old kindergarten program has proven to be one of our most effective early childhood education programs, SAGE has shown to be very effective in increasing student performance and decreasing the achievement gap."

"Unfortunately, the Republicans have placed early education for 4-year-olds and small class sizes for our children on the chopping block," Governor Doyle said. "It's shortsighted, it would put our kids at a terrible disadvantage, and as Governor, I just won't allow that to happen."

Yesterday, the Governor announced that he will use his veto pen to cut at least \$100 million in spending added to his budget by the Legislature. By cutting this \$100 million, the Governor said, he is able to restore the cuts to 4-year-old kindergarten and protect SAGE.

"Our kids should be our first priority – they shouldn't be the first ones on the chopping block, and the budget shouldn't be balanced at their expense," Governor Doyle said. "Wisconsin's public education system – from 4-year-old kindergarten through college at our UW-System – has long been the envy of other states, and I am not about to let our system erode under my watch."