



**INTEGRATION:** Michael Morgan and Amanda Oliver aim to promote Asian language and culture studies to students by joining the Asia Literacy Ambassador project. **Photo:** Grant Currall

## Shenton's Asian business focus

■ Emily Morgan

SHENTON College this week became the first Western Australian school to become involved in the federally funded Asia Literacy Ambassador project, which aims to increase students' understanding of Asian culture, language and business practices.

The project, which currently has 20 member schools and 30 ambassadors, promotes the relevance of Asian studies for students by showcasing how language and cultural understanding can lead to business and career opportunities.

Shenton College's business partner for the program is Gold Tours and Education managing director, Jason Hutchinson, with whom the school will engage for a minimum six months.

The Asia Literacy Ambassador

project is aligned with federal government initiative Business Alliance for Asia Literacy and is aiming to connect BAAL members – including Fortescue Metals Group and Wesfarmers – with Australian schools.

Shenton College principal Michael Morgan told *WA Business News* WA's trade links with Asia made the program particularly relevant.

The program relates to Asia generally, through Shenton will focus on Japan.

"This is relevant for Australia and for WA given our resource industry and the vast amount of trade we do with Japan as a country," Mr Morgan said.

"The ambassadors program links schools and business. It is about relevance; a child has got to see why they take on a language and business is a relevant portal for a child.

"The main focus is, what can we provide to students that will enable

them to see the relevance of Japanese industry to them as an individual?"

"Language is a passport. It can help to break down barriers.

"You can actually have an understanding of the culture, communicate with the culture and, yes, you can have a business with that culture."

Mr Morgan said the school had long been focused on delivering sound Asian studies opportunities.

Shenton College joined Willetton Senior High School, Australind and Rossmoyne senior high schools, and Mt Lawley High School as WA's Asian Language Hub schools this year, and hired Asian studies coordinator Amanda Oliver to oversee the development of Asian studies at the school.

"The end point of the initiative is that you have raised awareness and increased fluency of students leaving year 12," Mr Morgan said.