1. The Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairshas nationally recognised the value of developing language skills and intercultural understanding as a core component of students’ educational experience.
2. The Council of Australian Governments agreed to the National Asian Languages and Studies in Schools Program in December 2008 through the Productivity Agenda Working Group. The program specifically targets Mandarin, Indonesian, Japanese and Korean.
3. The most commonly taught languages in Queensland state schools are currently Japanese, German, Chinese (Mandarin), French, Indonesian and Italian, along with Spanish and Vietnamese.
4. The Australian Languages Curriculum (part of Phase Two of the Australian Curriculum) is now being developed and is expected to be available by 2012. Schools will deliver the national curriculum once it becomes available in the language/s they offer. Where there is no Australian Languages Curriculum in a particular language, schools will continue a Queensland Languages Curriculum.
5. Cabinet noted the Department of Education and Training’s plan to ensure that languages are taught in the majority (90 per cent) of state schools as a mandatory subject in Years 6, 7 and 8 by the beginning of 2011.
6. Cabinet noted that all State schools will implement either a National Languages curriculum (where the curriculum is available) or continue with a Queensland Languages curriculum from 2012.
7. Cabinet approved that languages be defined as Key Learning Area language studies, which focus on language proficiency, linguistic competencies, and incorporate intercultural understanding.
8. Cabinet approved that Indigenous languages and Australian Sign Language (AUSLAN) be recognised as options for mandatory study.
9. Cabinet approved that individual students may be exempted from mandatory language study only where it is in their best interests, in line with section 21 of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006.*
10. *Attachments*
* Nil.