

NJSIAA Position on Baseball Players Sunglasses not as Designed

In 2011, following the principles of safety and risk management, NJSIAA instituted a policy prohibiting baseball players from wearing sunglasses in a manner that they are not designed for. Baseball players traditionally wore flip down sunglasses in the past.

With increased television and social media coverage of professional players wearing sunglasses as a fashion statement, it was not surprising to find high school players modeling the behavior of their favorite professional player.

Sunglasses are not equipment outlined in the rule book. They have been treated as an adornment under the jewelry provision. Players do not understand why they cannot wear sunglasses on the bill of the cap.

At the conclusion of the 2021 season, the NJSIAA Baseball Interpreter conducted a survey of coaches and umpires. It became clear that coaches dislike the policy and find that policy enforcement among teams is inconsistent. Umpires do not want to be “fashion police” and thus enforcement is inconsistent.

Faced with other programs permitting the wearing of sunglasses in any manner among professional, collegiate and summer baseball, NJSIAA will experiment with a one year change.

For the 2022 baseball season, NJSIAA will monitor and collect information on the wearing of sunglasses. Baseball Coaches must address the wearing of sunglasses with players addressing the possibility of injury due to wearing sunglasses not as designed. Umpires are directed to leave enforcement to head coaches and concern themselves only with sunglasses that project a glare and possibly place other players in a dangerous position.