

Teacher pleads not guilty to sex charges Antioch

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Correction: *Corrections for five years. He is expected to appear in court again next month.*

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An Antioch Upper Grade School teacher pleaded not guilty to criminal sexual abuse charges Wednesday in Lake County Circuit Court.

Wes Owens, 52, of Solon Mills in McHenry County was placed on administrative leave in September by school officials after he was arrested on sex charges in both Lake and McHenry counties.

Owens, who taught sixth- and seventh-grade language arts at the school, was taken into custody after receiving information that he had a relationship with a student that began in 1997.

Authorities said the alleged victim was 15 years old at the time.

Owens was charged with two counts of criminal sexual assault and two counts of aggravated criminal sexual abuse for having inappropriate relations with a teenager.

Sexual assault is a Class 1 offense and carries a penalty of four to 15 years in prison. Aggravated criminal sexual abuse is a Class 2 offense that could land Owens in the Illinois Department of Corrections for five years.

He is expected to appear in court again next month.