



Former St. Helens teacher now faces 29 sexual abuse charges

By [Jeff Thompson](#) (OPB)

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An amended indictment shows former St. Helens High School choir teacher Eric Stearns, 47, is now accused of sexually abusing 16 victims.

A St. Helens High School choir teacher jailed for alleged sexual abuse against students is facing new charges, and his request for bail was denied Monday.

Court records show Eric Stearns, 47, is now facing 29 counts of sexual abuse, 26 of which are felony charges. An amended indictment against him now includes 16 total victims.

The alleged abuse happened between 2015 and the current school year.

The new charges come as the St. Helens Police Department continues investigating a [crisis of widespread sexual abuse](#) against students at St. Helens High School.

Stearns had posted bail following his initial arrest in November. But he turned himself in and has remained in Columbia County Jail since [additional charges were added in January](#).

He is expected to appear in court again in June.

Detectives believe there could be more victims who have not yet come forward. Anyone with additional information about Stearns is asked to call St. Helens police at [503-397-1521](#).

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