

# Author of *The Notebook* Sued Over Alleged Racism, Homophobia, Anti-Semitism

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**The former headmaster of the school alleges that Sparks made bigoted comments and did not support diversity**

The former headmaster of a private school founded by Nicholas Sparks alleges in a [lawsuit](#) filed Thursday that the best-selling author, along with other school officials, forced him out of office after he tried to recruit black students and faculty.

Saul Hillel Benjamin's lawsuit claims that he was also forced to endure anti-Semitic comments and was penalized for supporting a bullied group of gay students.

Benjamin says that when he tried to recruit black students and teachers, *The Notebook* scribe told him "diversity should not be measured by percentages of minority students enrolled or minority faculty employed," according to the lawsuit. Sparks allegedly criticized Benjamin for attending an NAACP event to meet potential students and parents and "indicated that Mr. Benjamin should utilize less public and visible means if he sought to meet with African-Americans."



Author Nicholas Sparks discusses his book "The Longest Ride" presented by Books and Books at Chapman Conference Center at Miami Dade College on Sept. 30, 2013 in Miami.

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Benjamin also alleges that Sparks and other officials made bigoted remarks against Jews and homosexuals. The suit claims that during one meeting “Sparks insisted that Mr. Benjamin stop talking about Islam, Judaism or any other non-Christian religion” at school functions because “that’s not what parents like to hear.”

Trustees allegedly pressured Benjamin not to support a club that was created by bullied students to discuss their sexual identities; they said Benjamin was “promoting a homosexual culture and agenda.” The lawsuit also accuses Sparks of locking the former headmaster in a room and yelling at him.

Sparks has made his name writing romance novels that are often turned into films, including *The Notebook*, *Dear John* and, most recently, *The Best of Me* which will be released in theaters later this month.

Benjamin said he feared for his safety when he resigned. His suit seeks damages from Sparks, three other members of the board of The Epiphany School of Global Studies in New Bern, North Carolina, and the Nicholas Sparks Foundation.

“As a gay, Jewish man who has represented Nick for almost 20 years, I find these allegations completely ludicrous and offensive,” entertainment attorney Scott Schwimer said in a statement released by Sparks’ publicist, [according to](#) the Associated Press.